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ABSTRACT

This report presents the conditions of children of color in the state of Washington, with statistics about economic support, health, and safety. Comments from leaders of color and other true stories help explain the situations reflected by the numerical data. It is important to note that most children of color in Washington live in solid families with more than one adult present and working, often at multiple low-paying jobs. However, differences in wages, benefits, and business opportunities produce great disparities of income and wealth between white people and children of color. Educational disparities are also apparent. Across grade levels, about 15% fewer students of color are meeting basic standards for mathematics, writing, and reading, than do white students. The problem is acute for African American, Hispanic American, and Native American children. Research shows that teachers often have lower expectations for students of color, and that curriculum and learning materials often do not reflect the diversity of students. Recognizing that educational gaps reflect what is happening in families and communities as well as in schools, leaders of color suggest that schools partner with community organizations to earn the trust of parents. There is also a need to recruit teachers of color to give students role models and to reduce the culture gap in schools. (Contains 67 graphs.) (SLD)

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THE FACTS of LIFE

for Children of Color in Washington State

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Richard Brandon
Washington Kids Count
Univ. of Washington

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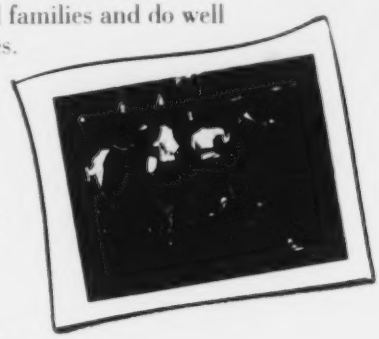
Most Children of Color Are Doing Well

While this report documents the fact that we are failing to meet all the needs of far too many children of color, it is important to keep in mind that most children of color live in successful families and do well in school and in their communities.



- Half (48%) live in families with an income adequate to meet the family's needs without assistance. A majority (56%) own their own home.
- One in six adults (16%) owns a business or farm or is self-employed
- Most children of color (86%) live with adults who have graduated from high school or higher, nearly two thirds (64%) live with adults who have at least some college, and almost one third (30%) with adults who have graduated from college.
- Most U.S.-born youth age 18 to 24 (73%) have graduated from high school.
- Half (49%) have a personal computer at home; one third (32%) have a personal computer connected to the internet at home.
- A majority of all middle school students (71%) and high school students (53%) do not use any harmful substances.
- Almost all secondary school students (90%) took no weapons at all to school in the past year.

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Introduction

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THE FACTS of LIFE

for Children of Color in Washington State

This report is intended to present as complete a portrait as possible of the conditions of children of color in the state of Washington. with hard statistics about economic support. educational performance. health. and safety. Quantitative data can only provide a partial picture of the realities facing children. We have therefore included commentary from leaders of color and other true stories to help explain the situations reflected by the numerical data. and to portray efforts to improve those conditions. It is our fervent hope that this report will help the citizens and policymakers of Washington understand the realities of children of color. We believe the realities shown in this report comprise a call for discussion and a call for action to improve the lives of all our children.

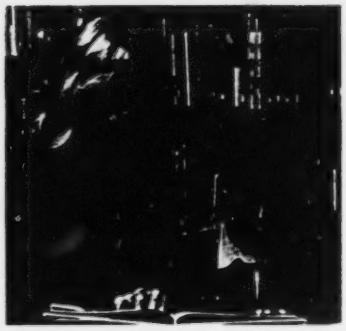
All children in Washington face tremendous opportunities and challenges: the differences between challenges faced by particular groups of children are only differences of degree.

The data demonstrate both strengths and challenges faced by children and families of color. On some measures. children of color from some groups fare the same or better than white children. On other measures. children of color fare worse.

It is clear that our state and communities are failing to meet the needs of children of color. Far too many lag behind in academic achievement. attend schools that do not meet their desire to learn. have parents who are not paid a living wage or benefits. live in dangerous neighborhoods. lack desirable adult role models. and engage in behavior dangerous to themselves or to others.

There is tremendous diversity within each group. and among different groups of children of color. To be effective. responses from communities and policymakers must therefore be tailored to the needs of distinct children and families in particular groups.

Social and Economic Support

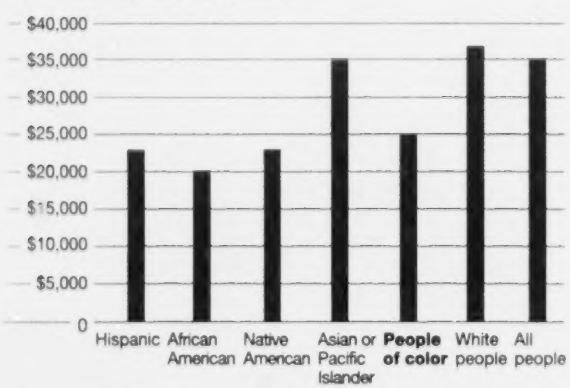


Most children of color in Washington live in solid families with more than one adult present and working, often at multiple low-paying jobs. Indeed, the percentage of adults working full time is greater for people of color than for whites. However, differences in wages, benefits and business opportunities produce great disparities of income and wealth between white people and people of color. While income disparity between the wealthiest families and all others has been increasing, it is especially acute for families with children of color:

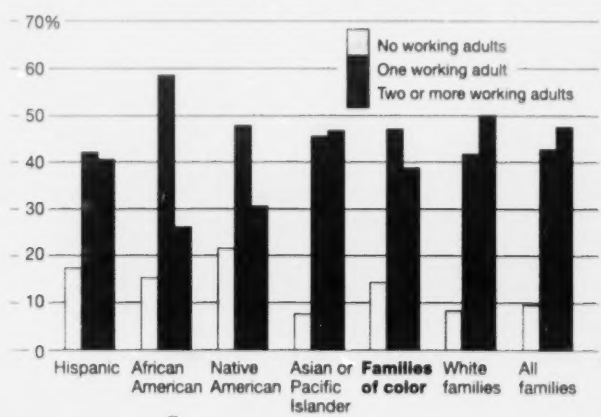
- The average income for people of color is about $25,000 a year, one third lower than the $37,000 average for white wage earners.
- For Hispanic, African-American, and Native American families, annual income averages $20,000 to $23,000 a year—the minimum necessary to provide basic needs. Half of these children live in households where the adults are working for wages and benefits less than sufficient to provide food, housing, transportation, health, and child care without help.
- While Washingtonians can be proud of expanding access to health care for children, one in eight children of color lack health insurance, twice the rate of white children.
- A family's ability to accumulate economic assets is vital to prosperity over time and to withstand emergencies or downturns in economic cycles yet, a smaller percent of adults of color own their own homes (56%) or businesses (16%) than do white adults (75% and 30% respectively).
- Safe, affordable child care has become an economic necessity, as more than two thirds of children below age six have both parents working. Use of paid child care is lower for families of color (18%) than for white families (27%). However, children of color who are in paid care are there for longer hours, reflecting more full-time work by their parents. The issues of quality early care and education are most acute for children of color.
- The social and economic support of more than one adult greatly enhances children's prospects in life. More than one in three children of color is born to a single parent, compared to one in three white babies. One in ten children of color lives without the social and economic support of more than one adult

The documented disparities in income, health, and children's care, wealth, and social support are not random events. Leaders of color see how the hard work and struggles documented in this report are undercut by institutional racism and discrimination in employment opportunities. Children of color are not receiving the medical coverage, child care, and nutrition benefits to which they are entitled due to fear, stigma, and lack of program accessibility. Differences in language and culture often create extra barriers. Studies of national data reveal that people of color have less access to home mortgages and business loans due to the practices of financial institutions.

Median family income (1997).



Children in households with working adults.



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Educational Performance

Parents, business leaders and policymakers are focused on children attaining high levels of educational competence so they can perform well in their families, communities, and places of work. The state has adopted an ambitious education reform initiative, which includes checking at grades four, seven, and ten whether each child is performing up to standard. Schools and communities have a long way to go before all Washington children meet basic standards: for example, less than half of fourth grade students now meet standards in math or writing.

- Across grade levels, about 15 percent fewer students of color are meeting basic standards for math, writing, and reading than do white students.
- The problem is acute for African-American, Hispanic, and Native American children, with about one in five (18-20%) fourth graders meeting the math standard and only one in four (20-24%) meeting the writing standard.
- Some analysts have attributed test-score gaps to a lower value placed on learning by children of color. The data belie that myth: more students of color (57%) reported placing a high value on learning than did white students (43%). However, only a little more than a third (39%) of students of color say their schools give them meaningful and important work.
- About half of Washington high school students work outside of school, most working 10 to 20 hours per week. Hispanic and African-American students have the highest rates (12% and 14%) working more than 20 hours per week, which has the potential to interfere with their school performance.

Research shows that teachers tend to have lower expectations for children of color, who in turn may develop lower expectations for themselves. There is an insufficient percentage of teachers of color to provide good role models. Curriculum and learning materials also fail to reflect the diversity of the students, making them feel less a part of the learning community. Parents working long hours or at multiple jobs may be less likely to spend enough time helping with homework or school activities. Parents who have experienced racism or discrimination, or have limited English speaking ability, are less likely to feel they can comfortably enter a school and engage with teachers or administrators about their child's education. The causes of disparities in educational attainment are numerous and complex, but they must be addressed if we are to meet the needs of all children in our state for a world-class education.

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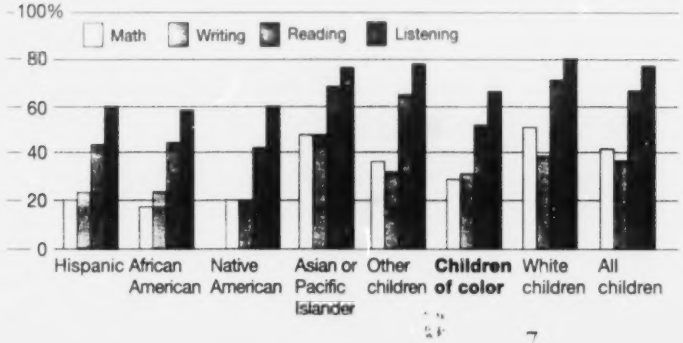
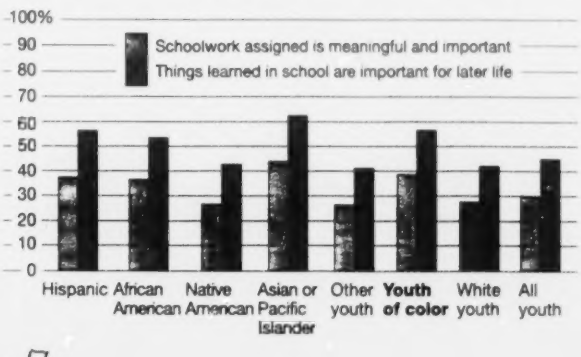
Fourth-grade students meeting standards.



High school students who give a high value to general learning at school compared to those saying work given in school is meaningful and important.



Health and Substance Abuse

Concerns for the health of children start before they are born and continue through adolescence. Good health starts with adequate prenatal care for mothers and is influenced by family and community role models. The behavior the child has learned in earlier years is expressed in adolescence either as responsible behavior, which propels the youth toward a healthy adulthood, or as a series of high-risk behaviors, which imperil the youth and the community.

Washington's investments in making prenatal care available to low-income mothers have paid off well, with a majority of all mothers receiving an adequate or optimal number of prenatal visits. However, disparities and inadequacies remain:

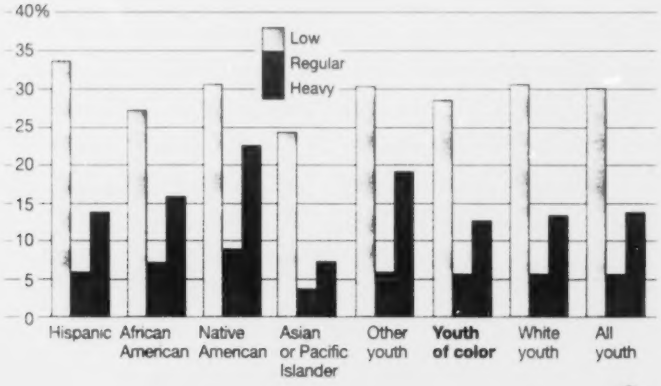
- The mothers of one in sixteen babies of color did not receive adequate prenatal care and about one percent received no prenatal care at all.
- More than one in four Hispanic, African-American, and Native American mothers do not receive prenatal care in the first trimester. Delaying prenatal care past the first trimester when the fetus is most vulnerable can be as much of a problem as an insufficient number of visits.

Rates of harmful substance use are no higher for adolescents of color than for whites, and half never use them. However, the rates of harmful substance use remain alarming for all groups of children. The problems clearly start in middle school and far too many students move rapidly from casual experimentation to regular or heavy use.

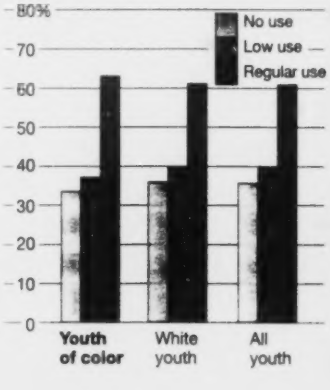
- One in five Washington children use substances on at least a low level; one in eight use them on a regular basis. Alcohol is the substance most commonly used at a low or infrequent level; marijuana is the most common harmful substance used regularly.
- Teen substance use is much higher for youth who are depressed; as many as half of adolescents of color report signs of depression, compared to one third of white students.
- About two in three students know adults who use drugs, and a majority know adults who sell drugs. Youth whose parents use alcohol or drugs are much more likely to use them. Native American youth are much more frequent users of tobacco, with one in four saying that adults in their community approve of their use.

Leaders of communities of color recognize that substance use can be devastating and deal with it as an intergenerational, communitywide problem, as demonstrated by the efforts by tribes to discourage alcohol use by taxing it heavily or outlawing its sale on tribal lands. Building a supportive community can help prevent normal adolescent uncertainties and pressures from developing into depression and high-risk behavior, and sustain individuals' attempts to be healthy.

Substance use by high school students in last 30 days.



Percentage of students with a family member who has a drug or alcohol problem, by level of teen substance use.



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Safer Children

Below the radar screen of mass-media attention, children often face dangers in their own homes. There are no perfect data on levels of abuse and neglect in Washington families each year. The data we do have is alarming.

- One third of all girls and one fifth of all boys in Washington say they have been physically or sexually abused at some point in their lives. Hispanic, Native American, and African-American youth self-report higher rates of abuse than white or Asian or Pacific Islander youth.
- Each year, four percent of Washington's children are involved in a case of abuse or neglect accepted for investigation. While most families are able to ensure safe environments through counseling and parent education, about 6,000 children must be removed from their homes and placed in foster care each year.
- The rate per population at which African-American children are involved in cases of child abuse or neglect accepted for investigation is three times that for white children. Referral rates are also higher for Native American and Hispanic children, but lower for Asians and Pacific Islanders.

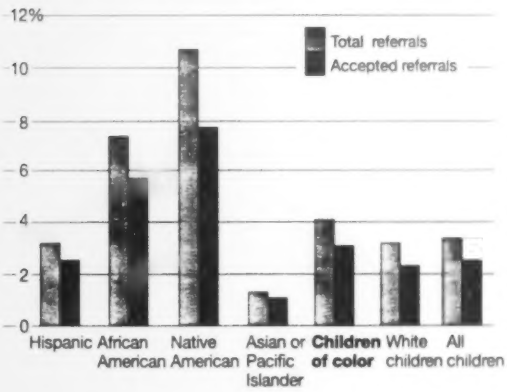
The causes of this disparity are unclear. Economic and other social pressures may explain some of the differences. There is little difference among adults from different groups about what kinds of parental behavior are harmful to children. In a well-controlled survey in Washington state, adults of color were equally or more protective of children than white parents. When parents of color are offered help with parenting, they accept it eagerly. However, they deeply resent the lack of understanding their families and culture receive from many family service professionals, who may mistake different parenting approaches for abuse. Native American tribal leaders are attempting to raise community awareness of domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect, and to urge their communities to report it. This helps explain the higher rate of reported maltreatment. Whatever the cause, it is critical that observing higher rates of reported maltreatment lead to investing in more programs to prevent abuse and neglect, and to support and educate families, so as to provide better environments for their children.

School shootings are terrible tragedies, but fortunately are rare.

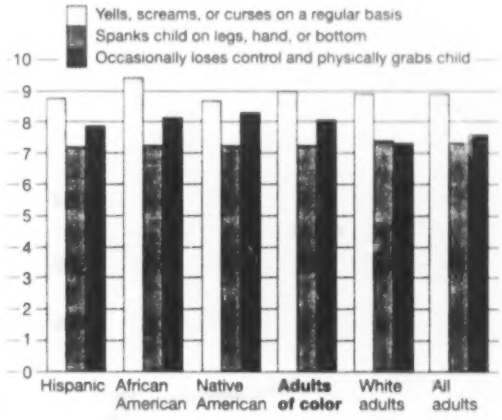
- Ninety-eight percent of adolescents from all groups have never carried a gun to school.

Yet, both white adolescents and those of color engage in troubling levels of behavior that is destructive to themselves or others. About half of youth of color and a third of white high school students say they get drunk or high at school, carry a gun, have stolen an automobile, have been arrested, or have attacked someone with the intent to seriously harm them. Destructive behavior is closely linked to the environment children grow up in. One fourth of students of color say their neighborhoods have high levels of fighting and one fifth reports high levels of crime and/or drug selling.

Children referred to and accepted by Child Protective Services (CPS), for suspected abuse or neglect, as a percentage of child population.



Adult rating of harmfulness of some parenting practices (10 = very harmful).



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The Impact of Racism A Call for Action

The conditions revealed by this report result from more than the actions of individuals. They reflect pervasive, embedded racial bias in our institutions, be they schools, community or government agencies, or businesses.

Institutional racism is the set of practices and policies influenced by racially biased assumptions that continue to affect the lives of children of color. The practices may be overt (refusing admission, employment, home mortgages, or business loans), but are often more subtle (lower expectations of students of color; glass ceilings on advancement at work). Both lead to unequal treatment and disparate outcomes for children and families of color, and undermine the notion of equal opportunity.

Differential treatment of people of color in schools and universities, the health care system, the justice system, and other major institutions is well documented. This has contributed to lower educational achievement, poor health outcomes, and lower wages and benefits. These impacts have contributed to disproportionate poverty among communities of color, leaving children and families vulnerable to the toll that poverty takes on human life.

Institutional racism is also manifested in acts of omission, such as the failure of institutions to address cultural barriers or to devote resources to providing underserved people with resources and opportunities.

Where racism contributes to damaging children, it must be eliminated. This will require an honest, thorough self-examination and aggressive change by institutions. It will also require the vigilance of communities and policymakers to identify the impacts of institutional racism and to promote change.

Leaders in each community of color are taking a hard look at the realities their children face and promoting efforts to better meet their needs, to build on their assets, and avoid the dangers they face.

The public and policymakers must ask how policy decisions are contributing to the damaging realities for children of color, and how they can be effectively improved.

- Since most low-income parents are working, we must ask how wages and benefits for parents of color can be raised to levels where their children can count on adequate economic resources.
- Since students of color place a high value on learning, improving test scores requires us to focus not on the attitudes of children, but on the encouragement, role models, and resources they are given.
- We must examine economic stress, parenting skills, and other family and community conditions that cause higher rates of abuse and neglect for some children of color.
- To prevent adolescents from using or abusing harmful substances, we must turn our attention to working with parents as well as with teens.
- While most children of unmarried mothers have enotional and economic support from more than one adult, we must turn our attention to seeing that single parents n certain communities have networks of support and companionship.

This report provides examples of programs and policies that accurately recognize the realities faced by our children and provide the support, encouragement, and resources necessary to meet their potential. We must build on these efforts to reach a scope whose magnitude matches the real facts of life shown in this report.

Demographics

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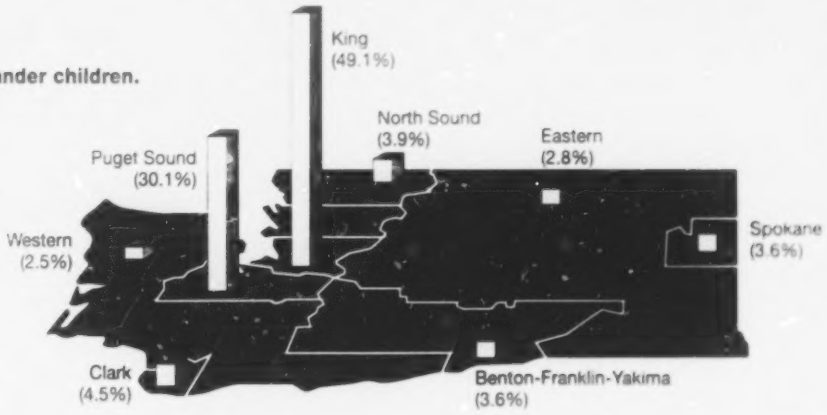
Washington, Home to Many Children of Color

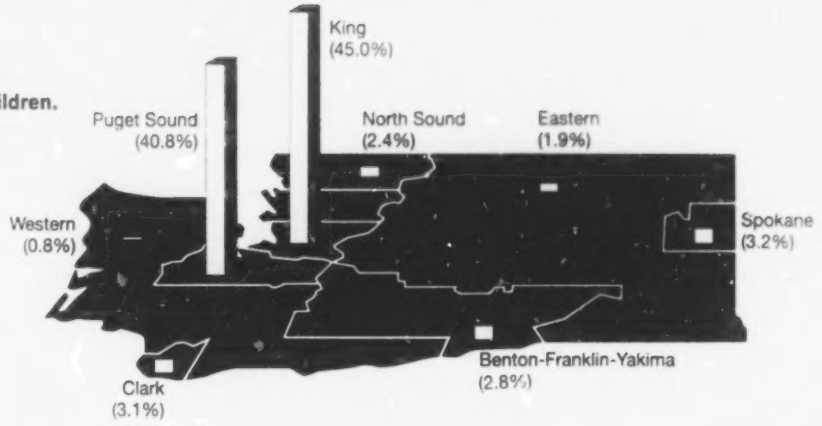
1 Asian and Pacific Islander children.

- Nearly 80 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children live in King County and the Puget Sound region.



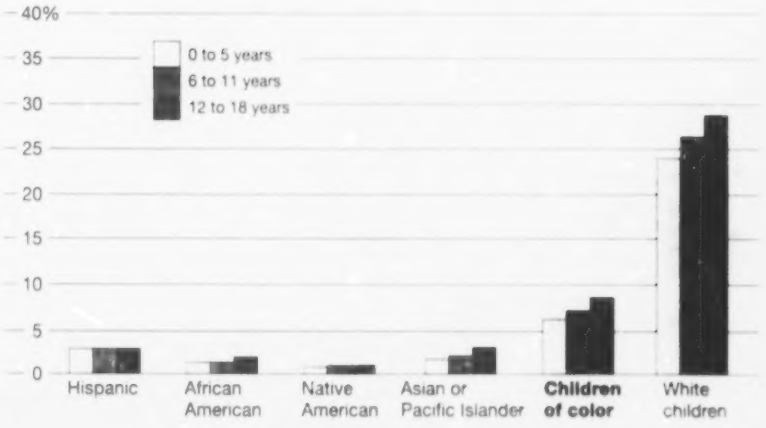
2 African-American children.

- African-American children are concentrated (86%) in King County and the Puget Sound region.



3 Washington's children by group and age.

- There are more adolescents than younger children among both children of color and white children.
- One in twelve children of color is an adolescent while one in sixteen is less than five years old.



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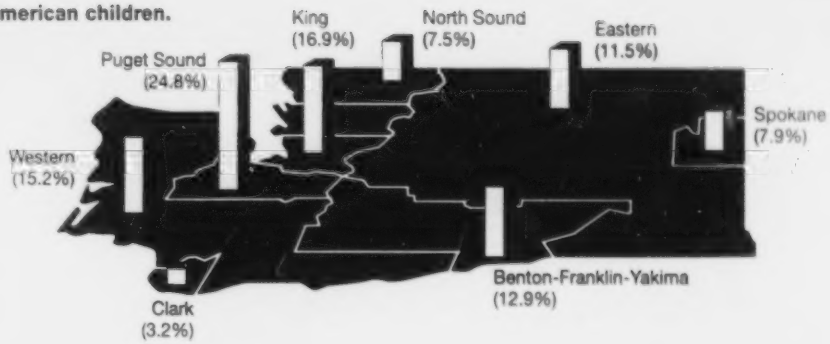
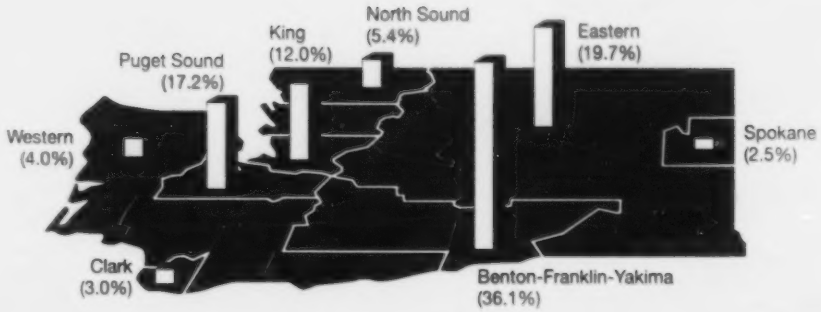
4 Native American children.



- Native American children are more evenly distributed; most (25%) are concentrated in the Puget Sound region.

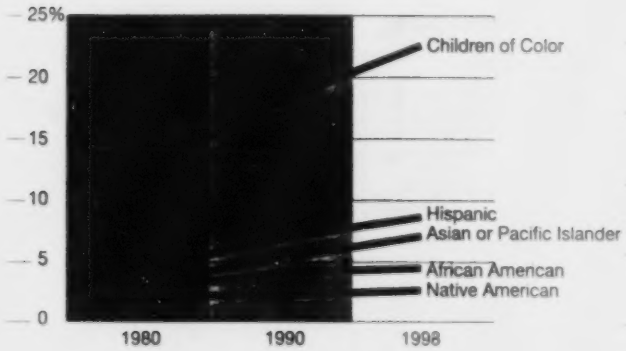
5 Hispanic children.

- Hispanic children are most heavily concentrated (36%) in the Benton-Franklin-Yakima region, but also comprise 20 percent of Eastern Washington and 17 percent in the Puget Sound region.

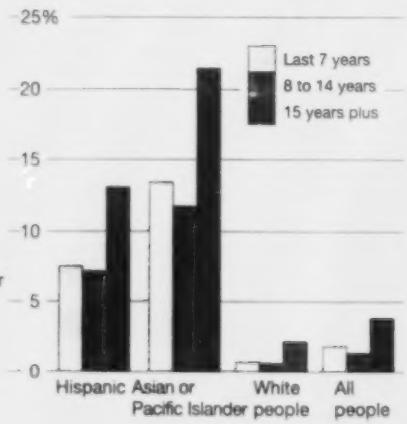


- In 1998, children of color made up nearly 23 percent of Washington's children, a 10 percent increase from 1980.
- Of those Hispanics and Asian and Pacific Islanders who immigrated to the U.S. more than five years ago, 67 percent and 46 percent, respectively, live in households where the primary language is not English.
- Thirty-four percent of the Hispanic population and 24 percent of the Asian and Pacific Islander population live in households where the primary language spoken is not English.

6 Growth trends in the percentage of Washington's children, by group.



7 Recent immigration to the U.S.*



*African American and Native American are not included because the sample size is too small to make reliable estimates.

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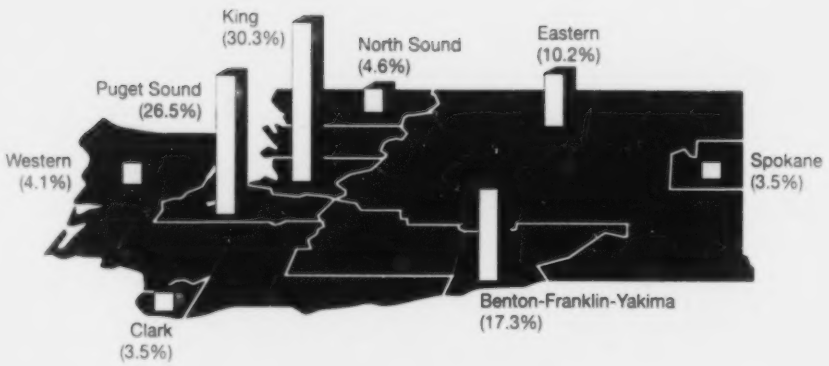
8 Children of color.

- Children of color: 57 percent of children of color live in the King County and Puget Sound regions.

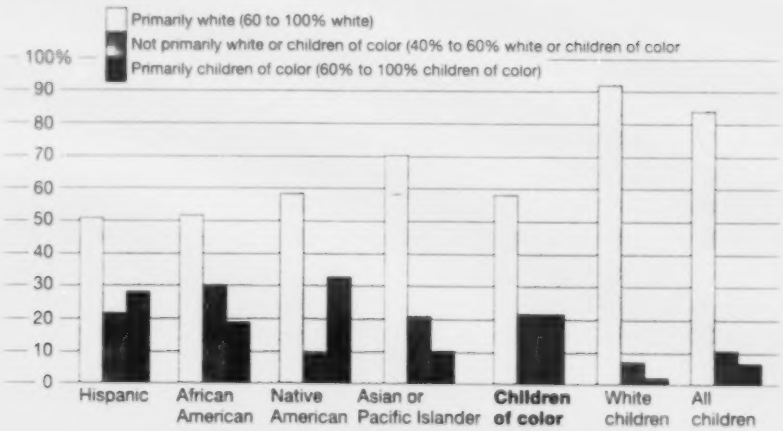


- Most white children (92%) attend primarily white schools.

- One in two children of color (58%) attend primarily white schools; one in five children of color (20%) attend schools that are close to half white/half children of color.

- Very few white children (2%) attend schools with mostly children of color.

9 Students attending racially segregated schools.



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Social and Economic Support

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Social and Economic Support

Community Perspectives

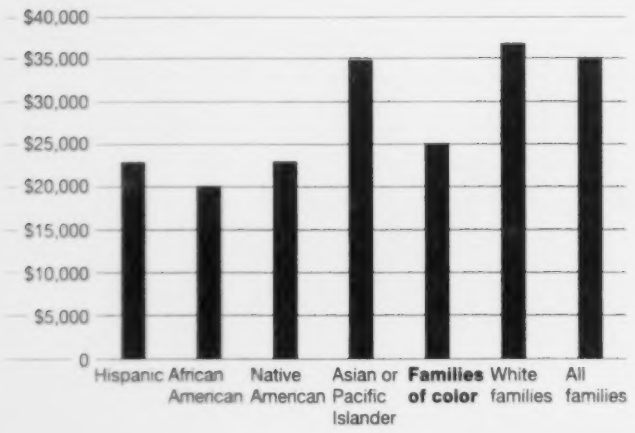
Leaders from communities of color see on a daily basis the combination of hard work at low-paying jobs and disproportionately low income quantified in this report. They see adults working hard—often at multiple jobs—but receiving low pay and little or no health or retirement benefits. They express several key areas of concern:

- Institutional racism and discrimination keep many adults of color from receiving the training and skills necessary to qualify for high-paying jobs, and many qualified individuals receive fewer advancement opportunities because of their color.
- Hard-working, low-income families are not receiving the assistance to which they are entitled—benefits for child care, medical coverage, and food and nutrition—due to fear, stigma, and program inaccessibility.
- Immigrants and refugees tend to face harsh discrimination and intimidation while confronting multiple economic and social barriers. Their immigrant status often makes them fearful of seeking needed help.

"There are harsher barriers due to immigration status, language barriers, and the color of their skin, which relegate immigrants and refugees to the lowest paying jobs in our economy," states Ms. Soya Jung of the Washington Alliance for Immigrant and Refugee Justice (WAIRJ).

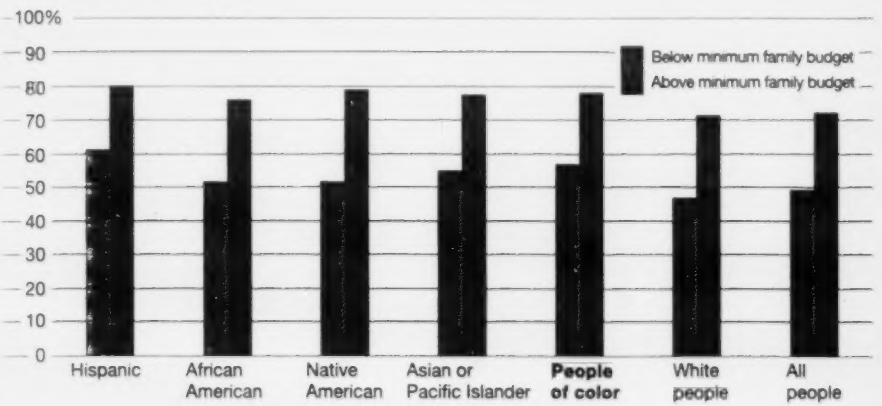
Ms. Bookda Gheisar, of the Cross Cultural Health Care Program, observes "families of color have less access to health care. Preventative care is a rare concept and ongoing care does not happen; most receive care when something is wrong."

1 Median family income.



- The average family income of Hispanic, African-American, and Native American families is $20,000-$23,000 a year, about one third below the statewide average family income of $35,000.

2 Adults with paid work.



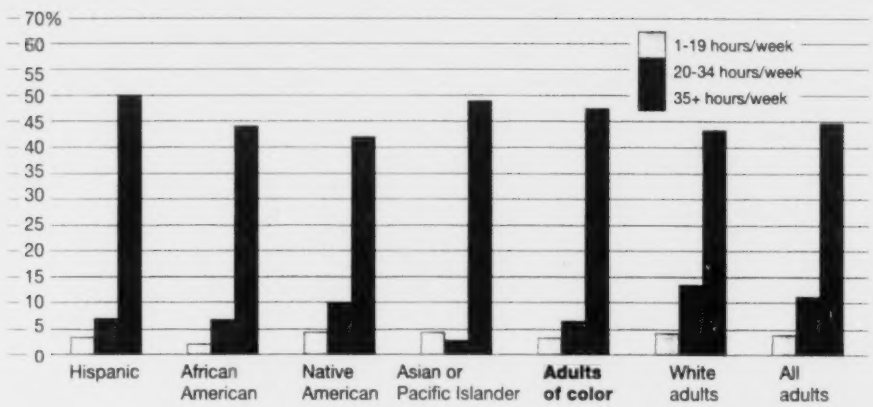
- More than half of adults of color with household income below a minimum family budget (about $24,000 a year) have paid work.

Improving Support for Children of Color

Improved Public Policies for Economic Self-sufficiency

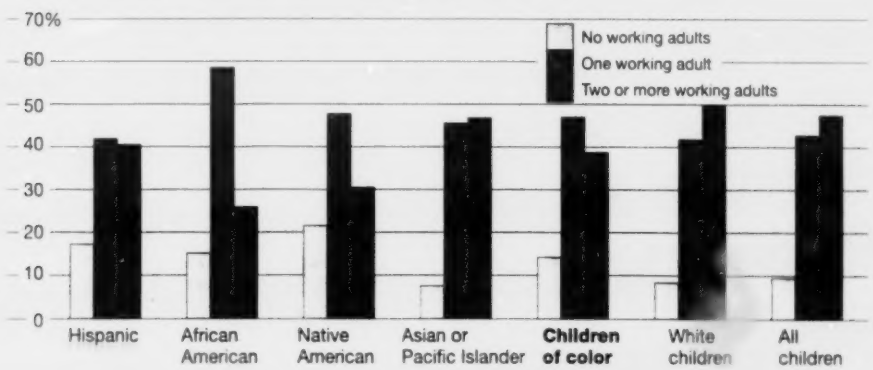
Public awareness of income disparity and its acceptance as a problem for American society as a whole is of primary concern. Without that acceptance and engagement, there will not be sufficient public will for change and improvement. Some specific approaches noted as helpful are: more investment in job training, English as a Second Language classes, and increases in wages. To bolster these programs, they see a need for important legal protections: maintaining civil rights protections to address work-place barriers and the right to collective bargaining for low-income workers, like farm workers. More outreach and public education programs are needed to educate communities and providers about the economic assistance available to low-wage workers—assistance with child care, health insurance, and food that will enable them to meet the needs. Action to make home mortgages and business loans more available will allow families of color to build assets.

3 Low-income adults working full or part time.



- Forty to fifty percent of all adults in low- to moderate-income households with children work full-time.

4 Children living in households with working adults.



- Thirty-nine percent of children of color live in households with two or more working adults.
- Although most children live in households with one or more working adults, one in seven children of color and one in thirteen white children live in households with no working adults.

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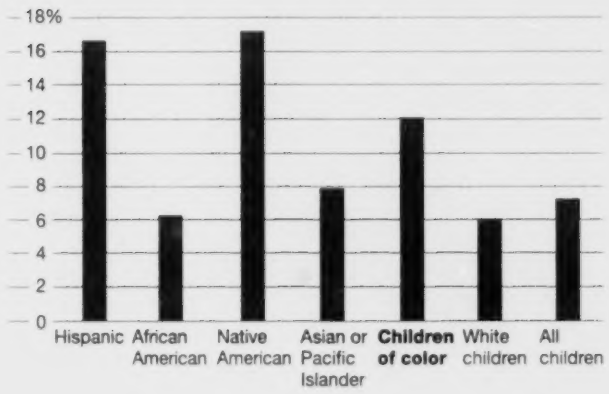
Programs That Give Hope

The Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office (LELO) provides advocacy for low-income workers through their community organizing, job training, and apprenticeship programs. LELO helps workers attain livable wage jobs through their Family Wage Jobs Organizing Project, which includes helping low-income people find jobs in the construction industry. Another practical approach that LELO takes toward improving opportunities is to help low-income workers who have lost their drivers licenses regain them, removing lack of transportation as a significant barrier to economic advancement.

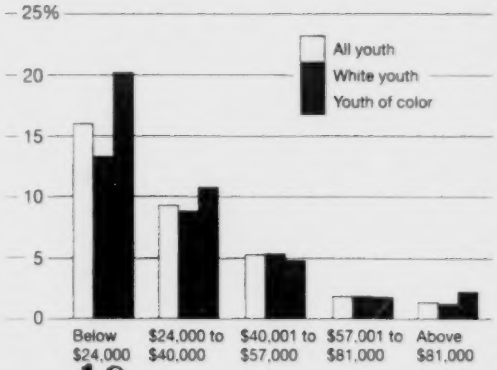
5 Children not covered by health insurance.

- One in six Hispanic and Native American children are not covered by health insurance.
- Lack of health insurance affects children of color at twice the rate of white children.



- Most children lacking health insurance belong to the poorest fifth of Washington's households.
- Twenty percent of children of color in the poorest fifth of Washington's households and 11 percent in the second poorest fifth do not have health insurance.

6 Children lacking health insurance by household income fifths.



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The Washington Alliance for Immigrant and Refugee Justice (WAIRJ) has worked for the rights of immigrants and refugees. with projects in western and central Washington. WAIRJ has also worked extensively with Latino and Pacific Islander refugee and immigrant communities. They are beginning to work more with East African refugee communities as their needs continue to grow. Their projects address workplace discrimination for farm workers and monitor their treatment by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

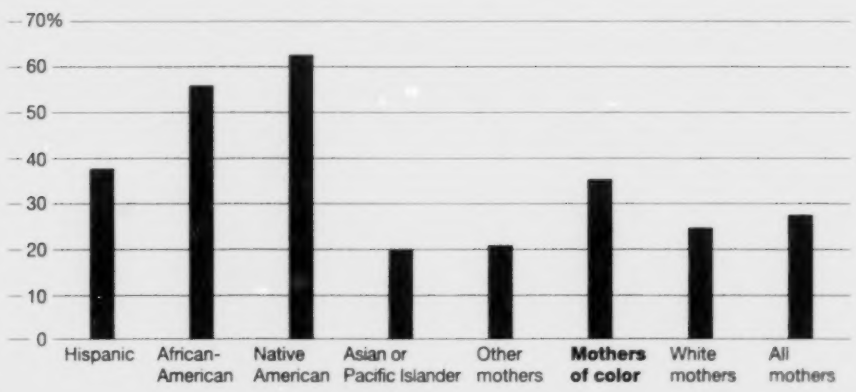
Constructing A Living Wage

Gabriela was a 27-year-old single mom struggling to care for both her daughter and her grandmother. She had been stuck for quite a while in service sector jobs. Working at these jobs did not earn her a wage that could adequately support her family or bring benefits like health care, nor were they likely to in the future. Gabriela was determined to make a better life for her family. She decided that work in a nontraditional field, like construction, might provide her with a door to advancement. But she needed help to get to employers in the industry who could open that door.

With the help of the Family Wage Jobs Organizing Project at LELO, Gabriela received training and career support to become an apprentice. She is now earning a living wage and is on track to move up the wage ladder and be able to provide benefits like health care to her daughter and grandmother.

More challenges remain. Gabriela must still overcome the hurdles of finding appropriate child care and having transportation to get there and then to work. She continues to work with LELO and members of her community to overcome these barriers, and to continue her training and education so she can move even closer to her future.

7 Births to unmarried mothers.



- More than one in four children born in 1998 were born to unmarried mothers.
- More than half of Native American and African-American children born in 1998 were born to unmarried mothers.

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The Cross Cultural Health Care Program at Pacific Medical Center has been addressing broad cultural issues that impact the health of individuals and families in ethnic minority communities in Seattle and nationwide. Through a combination of cultural competency training for health professionals and interpreters, research projects, and community coalition building the CCHCP serves as a bridge between communities and health care institutions to ensure full access to quality health care that is culturally and linguistically appropriate.

A Spiritual Journey to Leadership

Many tribes are building the strength of families and communities by reviving a traditional method of travel, using ocean-going dugout canoes that range from 25 to 50 feet long and seat anywhere from 5 to 40 people. The journeys happen annually with all ages, from 2 to 75 years, participating.

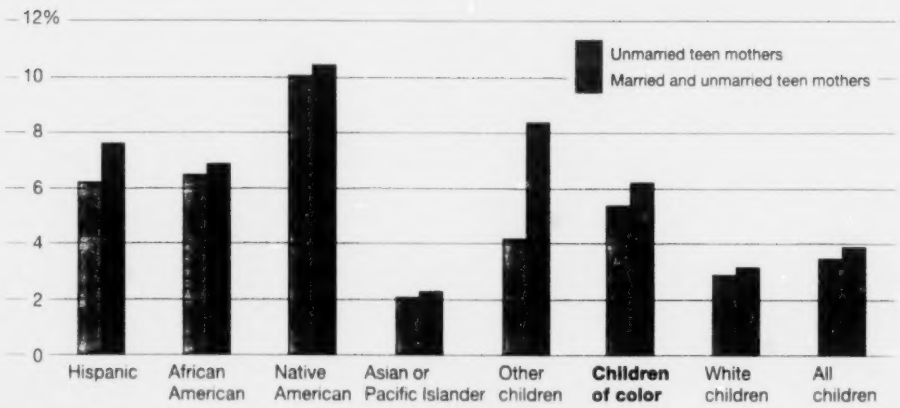
Numerous canoe societies, some sponsored by tribes and some by individual families, organize the journeys with at least a year of preparation (meeting, planning, practicing, and preparing clothing and

"The way programs are funded now, we have to prove that something is wrong and then get outside money and experts to fix it. It takes away from the community's ability to look first at what resources they have to solve problems."

—Jeff Smith, American Friends Service Committee, Indian Program

8 Children born to teen mothers.

- One in ten Native American, one in thirteen Hispanic, and one in fourteen African-American children born in 1998 were born to teenage mothers.



regalia) going into each voyage. The actual journey usually lasts two weeks.

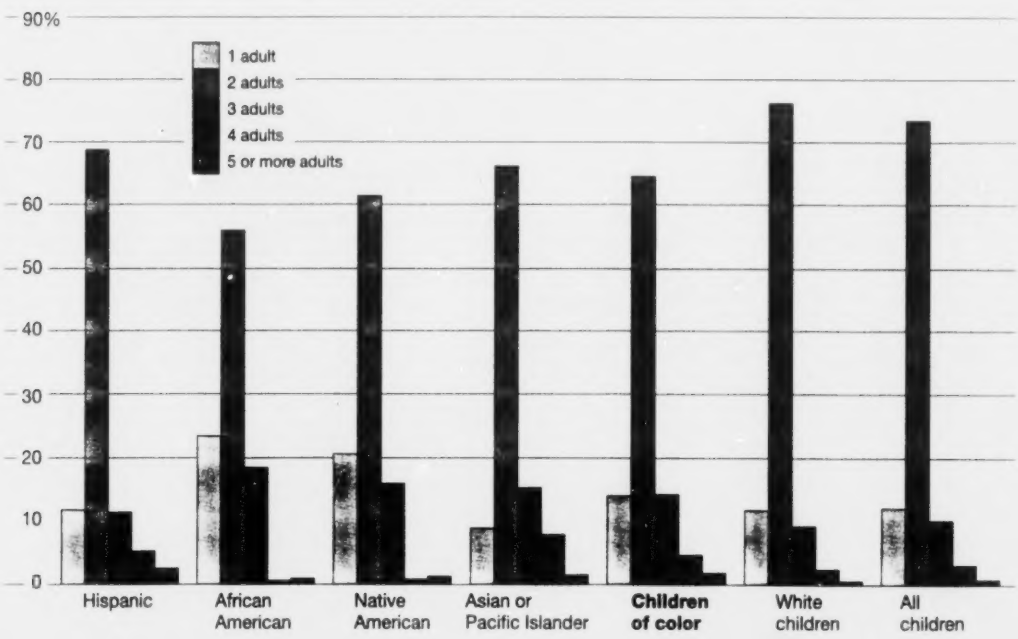
Many societies hold an initiation ceremony, some including the giving of a symbol to voyagers to wear for the journey. Many young people are involved and find it to be a rewarding experience, and some develop new skills and emerge as leaders.

One family had a particularly powerful and life-changing experience on one of the journeys. The family—a mother, father, and two sons— was in distress, thinking that they were likely to break apart. They prepared for and went on a canoe journey for the first time. They went through the initiation ceremony, each receiving a symbolic ring to wear.

The voyage was such an extraordinary experience for them that they decided to stay together and continue to do so. In fact, they have continued their involvement with the canoe journey, with one son having gone on to take a leadership position as a skipper of one of the canoes.

"We who have been on a journey really feel the spiritual aspect of the journey. Being out on the water in the cedar canoes is a cleansing experience—to reconnect with our culture and to have it be a powerful part of our lives that has real meaning today, not just a culture from long ago that we pull out of the closet for show," shares Jeff Smith, of AFSC.

9 Children living in households, by number of adults in the home.



- About one in five Native American and African-American children lives with only one adult, compared to about one in ten Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and white children.

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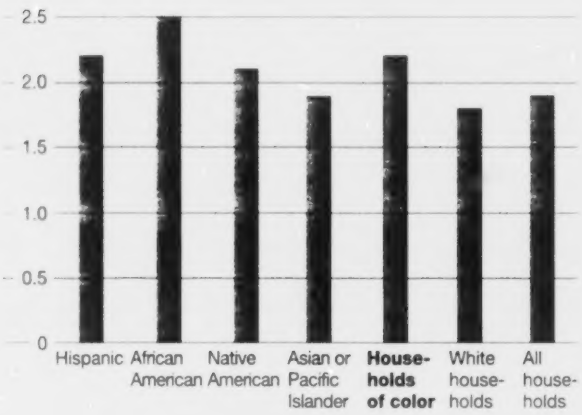
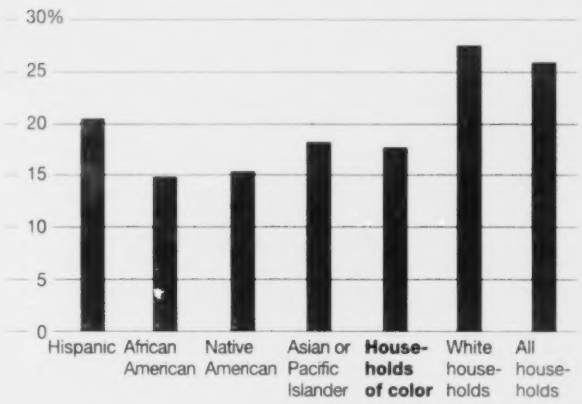
10 Mean number of children per household.

- African-American households with children have the highest average number of children.
- Overall, the average number of children in households with children is two.



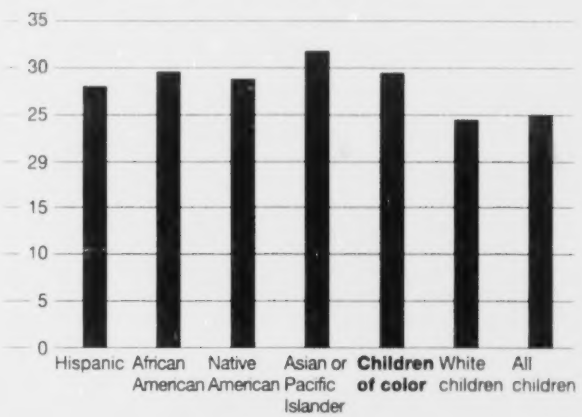
11 Households with children that use paid child care.

- A greater percentage of white households with children use paid child care than households of color with children.



12 Average hours per week in paid child care.

- On average, children of color spend more hours (30 hours per week) in paid child care than do white children (25 hours per week).



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Educational Performance

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Educational Performance

Community Perspectives

Community leaders of color consider it vital to link consideration of gaps in school test scores to understanding the factors influencing children of color in their families, schools, and communities, and to understand the links between different indicators in this report.

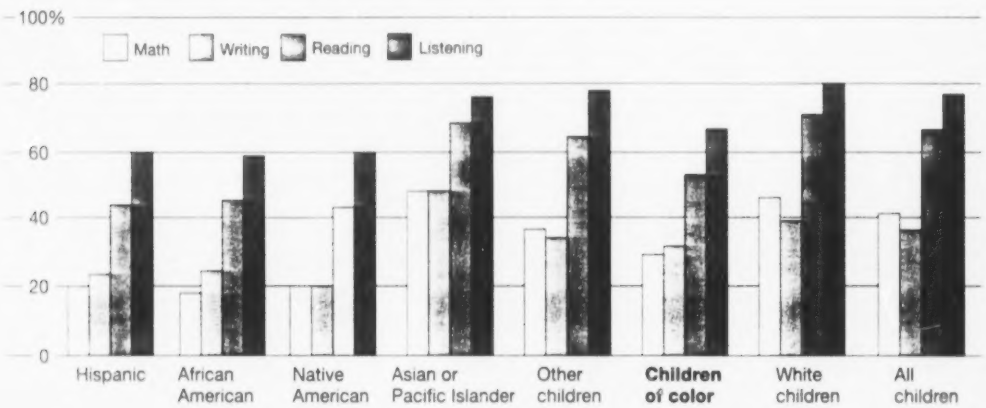
Lower income for their families affects children of color in many ways. The necessity for both parents to work to support their children can keep parents from helping children with their schoolwork; lower incomes produce lower rates of owning home computers and having internet access. Mr. Ricardo Garcia, manager of Radio KDNA, notes that "even when parents want to engage they are often poor, requiring both parents to work to meet basic economic needs. This can result in children being home alone, cared for by siblings or watching TV."

Schools and teachers often have low expectations for children of color, and this can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Despite studies showing that all children can learn, many students of color absorb these lower expectations, which inhibit their motivation to excel. In addition to setting higher expectations and encouraging children of color, leaders note a need to accommodate learning styles of different groups. "Teachers must have multiple ways to acknowledge and celebrate different kinds of achievement in the classroom," said Dr. Carmela Washington-Harvey of the Seattle Coalition for Education Equity. There is concern about whether the current focus on standards shifts attention from learning to testing, and away from the one-on-one instruction, smaller classrooms, and increased numbers of teachers of color that would truly change performance.

The lack of appropriate role models and personal connection to curriculum is also cited as an inhibitor of achievement for students of color; children don't see people who "look like me" in the schools they attend. Previous

- In all groups, more students met state standards for reading and listening than for writing and math in 1999.
- About one in five Hispanic, Native American, and African-American students, compared to one half of Asian or Pacific Islander and white students met the math standard.

1 Fourth-grade students meeting standards.



24

Washington Kids Count reports have shown that the percentage of teachers of color is far lower than the percentage of students of color in Washington, and we are below the national average. To be effective, multicultural considerations must be built into basic curriculum planning.

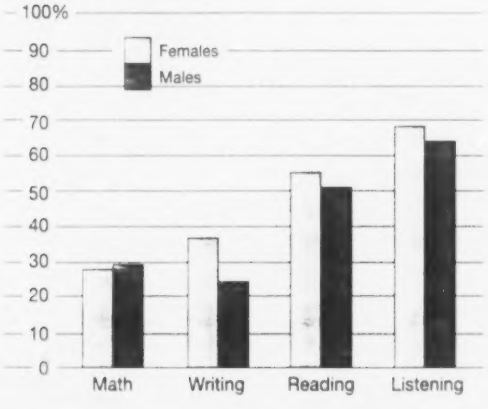
"Our community needs a strong, organized body of parents, teachers, and community members to change school policy and make the school district accountable. Without an organized voice the school district will continue in its path of educating the few and discarding the students who are underachievers," says Ms. Irene Woo of Powerful Schools.

Leaders cite a need to create a welcoming environment for parent engagement in school activities. This can be doubly difficult for immigrants. For example, in Mexican and Southeast Asian cultures, school teachers are in complete control and are expected to have full authority over the education of children in their classrooms. Parents from these cultures have difficulty assuming joint responsibility for their children's education, which can result in their children receiving less educational enrichment at home.

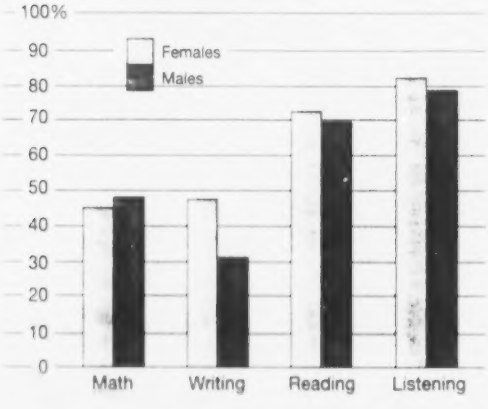
Racism plays out in family attitudes about schools as well. When parents of color have encountered racism or had bad schooling experiences, it is more difficult to get them to engage with teachers and administrators about their own children's education, not because they do not care but because they are skeptical that they will be treated with respect, or that their involvement will make a difference in how the school operates or treats their children.

- For students of color and for white students, more females than males met writing standards; males and females were about the same in math, reading, and listening.
- Across all subjects, about 15 percent fewer students of color than white students met the basic standard.

2 Fourth-grade students of color meeting standards.



3 Fourth-grade white students meeting standards.



Better Education for Children of Color

Improved Public Policies for Educational Performance

Educational leaders of color believe that we know what to do, we just need to devote the resources necessary to do it.

Children of color are often poor and living in school districts that are less willing or able to pass local levies to provide learning materials and programs. This compounds the effect of low-income families being less able to provide children with such critical resources as books and computers at home. Public programs, therefore, need to make learning resources available to low-income families. Transportation is also a critical factor in rural areas: poor families cannot use libraries and other community learning facilities if there is no public transportation.

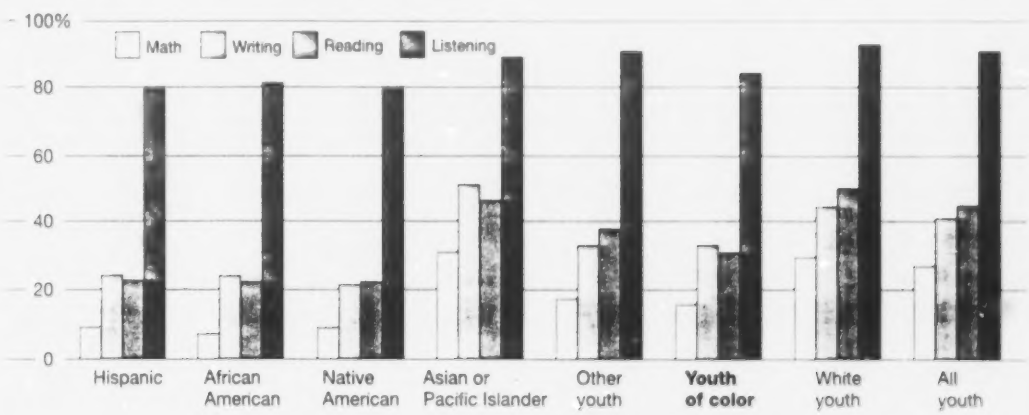
Children of color also need learning materials that reflect their lives and give them a sense of worth and engagement: "our children don't see themselves in the books. There isn't anything they can relate to—maybe once in a blue moon, but not often," says Ms. Jaci Oseguerra, of Consejo Counseling and Referral Services.

Recognizing that educational gaps reflect what is happening in families and communities as well as in schools, leaders suggest that schools partner with community-based organizations with a good connection to the community to earn the trust of parents. These efforts must bring together educators and social service professionals. "Right now, teaching takes precedence over student-support services. Those services must have the same priority so we are looking at the whole child," says Dr. Washington-Harvey.

There must be an effort made to recruit teachers of color, which would provide role models of successful learners and reduce the culture gap in schools. Teachers must also be trained to understand different cultures and work effectively with the highly diverse students they will now find in their classroom; this may in turn require major changes to teacher training programs at state universities.

- About two thirds of all seventh-grade students did not meet math standards in 1999.
- Fewer than half of all seventh-grade students met reading and writing standards in 1999.
- About one in ten Native American, Hispanic, and African-American seventh-grade students met math standards in 1999, compared to three in ten white and Asian or Pacific Islander students.

4 Seventh-grade students meeting standards.



Structure Improves Behavior

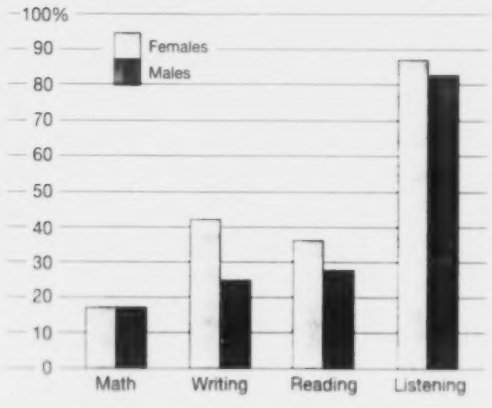
Leon, a 12-year-old boy, has been in and out of foster homes since he was 6 years old. He was having difficulty in school; his teachers said that he lacked attention and motivation and found him disruptive. In the hope of improving both his behavior at home and his performance at school, those who worked with Leon—his teachers, social worker, and foster family—struggled with discovering what they could do to harness his energy and give him a safe emotional outlet, as well as some sort of motivating goal.

They enrolled Leon in a Tae Kwan Do class offered by the Powerful Schools Community Schools Program. After a couple of weeks in the class, he started to show significant improvement in his attitude toward and behavior in school. His foster mother complained less about Leon's disruptive behavior and praised his more respectful manner toward her and other members of their household. The Tae Kwan Do class gave Leon an attractive, structured form of discipline he needed to improve his behavior. And more than anything, it gave him a safe and supportive environment where he could release some of his emotions.

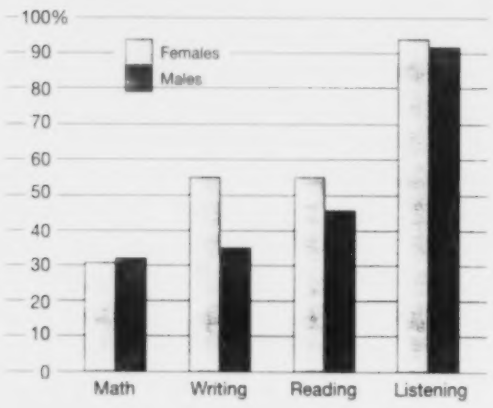
Year-round schooling can help reduce gaps in achievement. Children lose much of their learning over the long summer break: this is exacerbated if they have to be removed from school to work or visit their country of origin. They can be kept up to speed if given access to summer classes and educational programs. Afterschool tutoring and one-on-one instruction can help during the regular school year.

- For both students of color and white students, more females than males met state standards for reading and writing; however, males and females were about the same in math and listening skills.

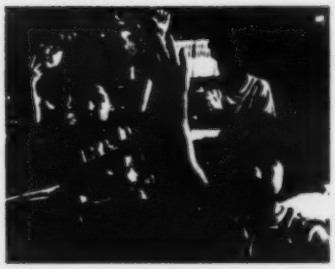
5 Seventh-grade students of color meeting standards.



6 Seventh-grade white students meeting standards.



- Across all subjects, about 15 percent fewer students of color than white students met basic standards.



Bilingual education programs allow children to learn a variety of subjects in their home language while attaining English language proficiency. Many students are placed in all-English classes too soon and fall behind in other subjects. They are then labeled as failures and may be relegated to special education classes or otherwise set into the downward spiral of lowered learning expectations.

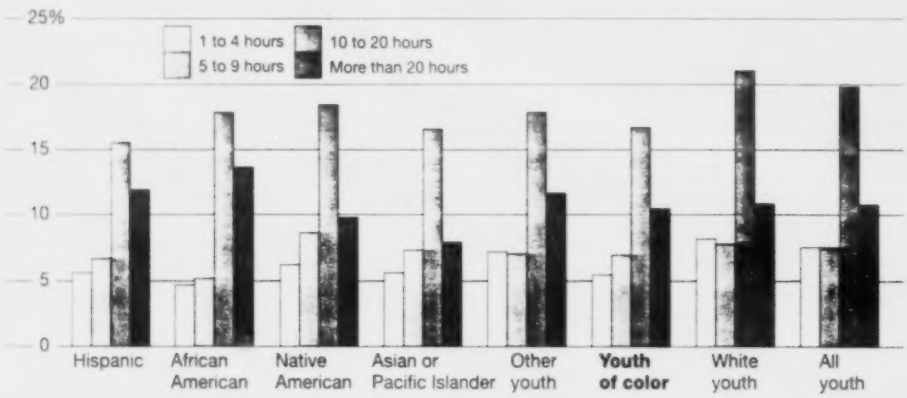
Programs That Give Hope

Powerful Schools was founded in 1991 by parents, educators, community members, and business people in Seattle's Rainier Valley area who were concerned about school reform. The group formed to improve student performance, create a strong community, and provide a cost-effective model for school reform. They raise performance expectations of students, parents, and teachers by committing that every child will be at or above educational standards by fifth grade. The program has achieved documented improvements in student learning through reading and writing programs, programs to improve relationships with adults, and afterschool programs. Parent

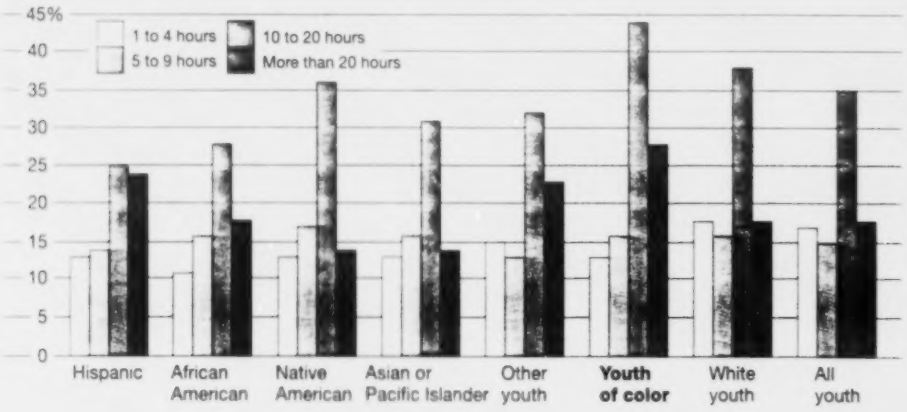
- Of those students who work, the largest group work ten to twenty hours per week.

- Hispanic and African-American students are most likely to work the long hours that can distract from schoolwork.

7 Hours per week worked by high school students.



8 Importance of learning for high school students, by hours worked.



- High school students who work 10 to 20 hours per week are more likely to think that school work is important for later life than students who work more or less than that.

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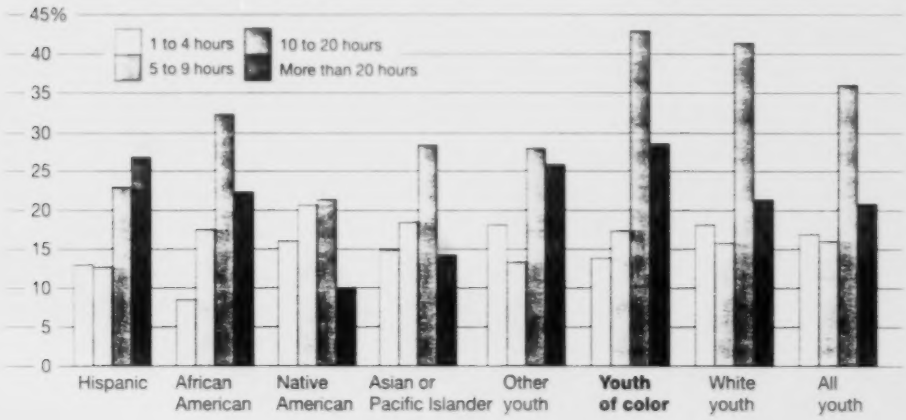
and community volunteers are actively sought as partners in the learning process and welcomed into the schools. This helps provide role models and motivators from the same cultural background as students.

The Seattle Coalition for Educational Equity (SCEE) has a mission of strengthening the educational experience for underserved students and their families on the way to achieving their educational goals. SCEE undertakes collaboration among educational and noneducational organizations to meet the needs of both students and families. It has improved the retention and graduation rates for students by promoting programs and services and integrating these into member institutions, linking educators with social- and family-service professionals and the broader community. A series of parent and family institutes is designed to increase families' understanding of the new Washington State Academic Standards, and to help them advocate for their children within the public.

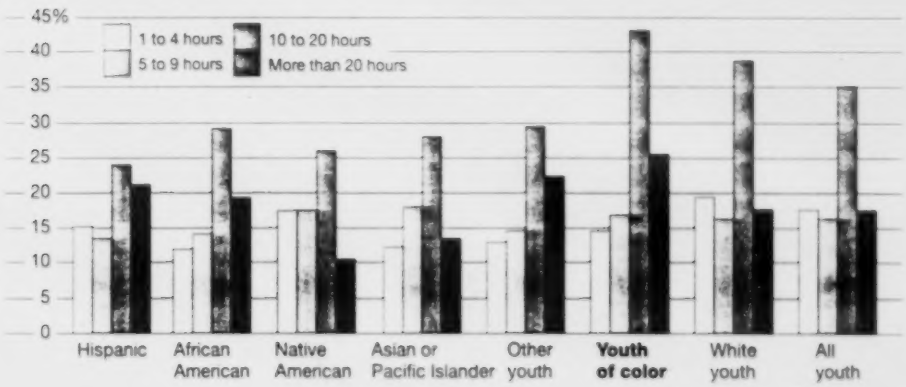
Radio KDNA, a Spanish-language public radio station in the Yakima Valley emphasizing education, is an excellent example of a community acting on its own behalf. "We help our listeners cope with their new environment in this country, we motivate and mobilize them to learn English and about this culture, and we encourage them to keep the strong

9 High School students saying school courses are interesting, by hours worked.



- High school students who work 10 to 20 hours per week are more likely to think that courses are interesting than students who work more or less than that.

10 High School students saying school work is meaningful and important, by hours worked.



- High school students who work 10 to 20 hours per week are more likely to think that their assigned schoolwork is meaningful and important than students who work more or less than that.

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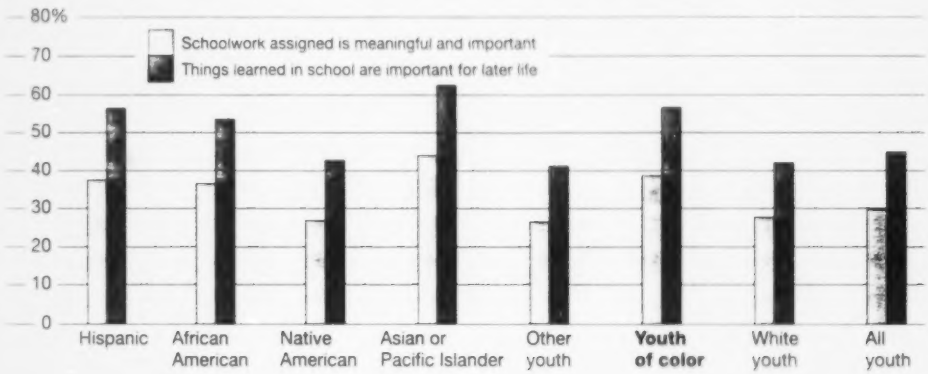
values that they brought with them from Mexico." says manager Ricardo Garcia. KDNA encourages parents to read to their children. go to school conferences. get to know their children's teacher and school administrators. and do anything they can to be involved in their children's education. One innovative project was to distribute 60-minute audio cassettes with popular music on one side and information about education reform. standards. and the new WASL tests on the other.

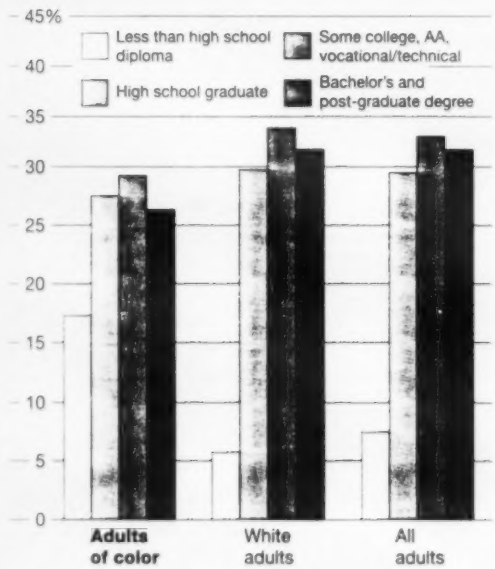
- More high school students place a high value on learning than on the quality of the school work they are assigned.
- More high school students of color (60%) than white students (40%) think the things they learn in school will be important for their later life.

11 Students with a high value of general learning compared with those saying work given in school is meaningful and important.

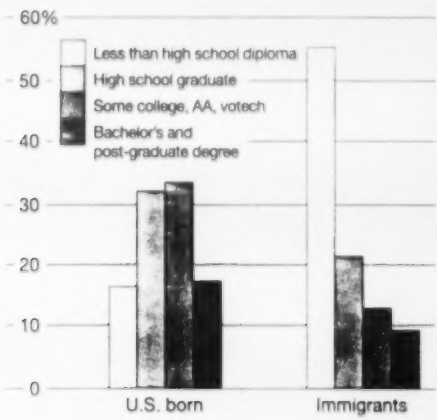


12 Educational attainment of adults.

- More than 80 percent of adults of color have a high school diploma, some college, or higher. This is slightly lower than the percentage of all adults with a high school degree or higher (about 90 %).
- About 70 percent of Hispanic adults have a high school diploma, some college, or higher. The lower high school graduation rate is mostly among immigrants.



13 Educational attainment of U.S.-born versus immigrant-Hispanic adults.



Health and
Substance Abuse

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Health and Substance Abuse

- Low use:
  Cigarettes
  Up to five a day
  Alcohol and marijuana
  1-5 times a month
  Hard drugs
  1-2 times a month

- Regular use:
  Cigarettes
  Up to a pack a day
  Alcohol and marijuana
  6-9 times a month
  Hard drugs
  3-5 times a month

- Heavy use:
  Cigarettes
  More than a pack a day
  Alcohol and marijuana
  10 or more times a month
  Hard drugs
  6 or more times a month

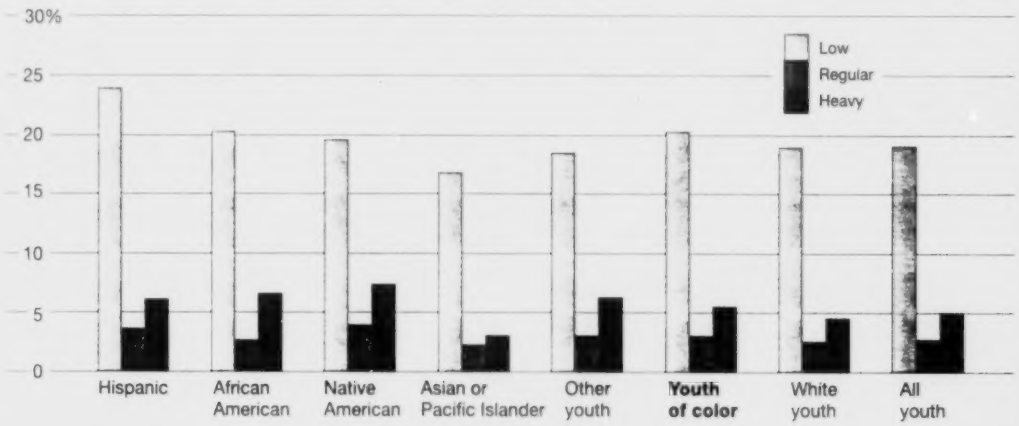
- Use of harmful substances is approximately equal for youth of color and white youth.

- One in five high school students report regular or heavy use of harmful substances.

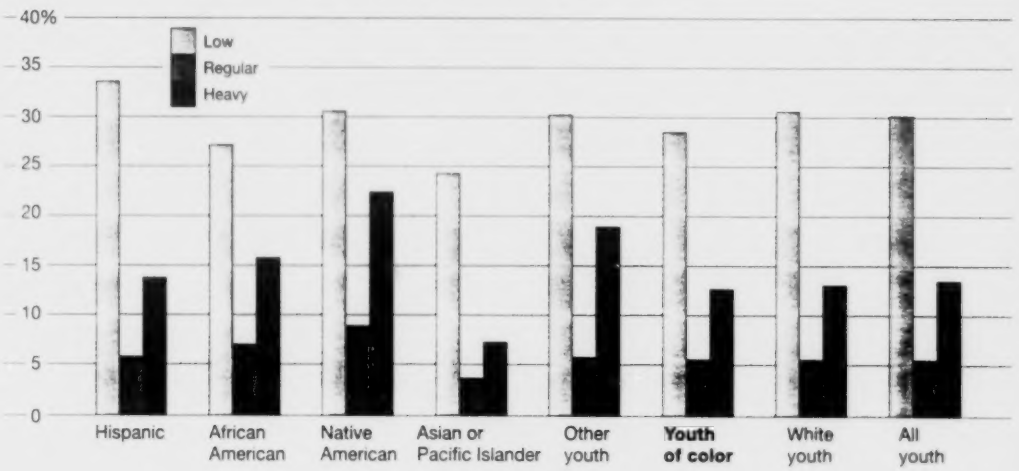
Community Perspectives

Substance abuse is an equally serious problem for both children of color and white youth. Leaders in the communities of color point out two limitations in the school-based Adolescent Health Survey from which the substance abuse estimates were derived. First, for all youth, those with serious substance abuse problems are more likely to have dropped out of school and not be participating in the survey; this would affect all groups of children. The broad category of "Asian or Pacific Islander" also presents a problem. This combines the largely Chinese American and Japanese American communities that have been established in the United States for many generations, and thereby gained greater opportunities for adjustment, with the Pacific Islander and Southeast Asian populations, who have arrived more recently and are suffering greater family and social disruption. "The experiences of a group that is on its fourth or fifth generation in this country are going to be totally different than for those groups who only have one or two generations here," says Ms. Elaine Ishihara.

1 Middle school students' substance use in the last 30 days.



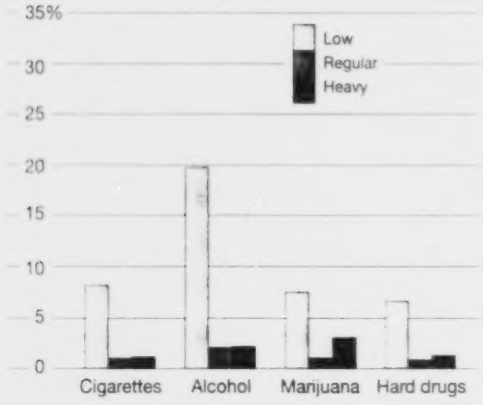
2 High school students' substance use in the last 30 days.



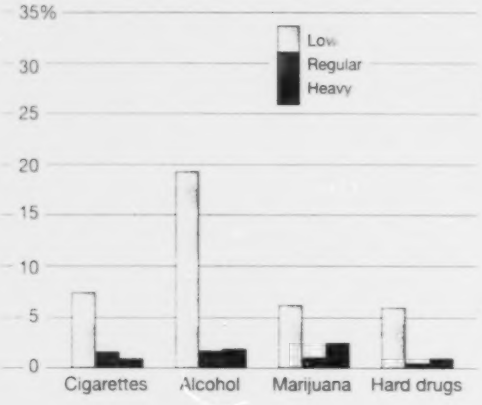
of Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families Against Substance Abuse (WAPIFASA). This intergenerational difference is demonstrated in the data on school completion, where lack of high school diplomas is much higher for recent immigrants than for U.S.-born minorities. Ishihara notes that Asian and Pacific Islander youth often face "lots of pressure with no release," with the pressures to fit in making them vulnerable to substance abuse. She says this is compounded by a cultural belief that discourages seeking help: "We can take care of it in the family; don't let anyone else know; it will bring shame."

Native American leaders also express concern with the failure to recognize the extreme need of their community for resources and attention to combating substance abuse. Many tribes have recognized substance abuse as a devastating, multigenerational issue, and are mounting large scale efforts to combat it. They also expressed concern that too many programs focus on the deficiencies of youth of color and fail to utilize the assets in their communities.

3 Harmful substance use in the last 30 days among middle school students of color.

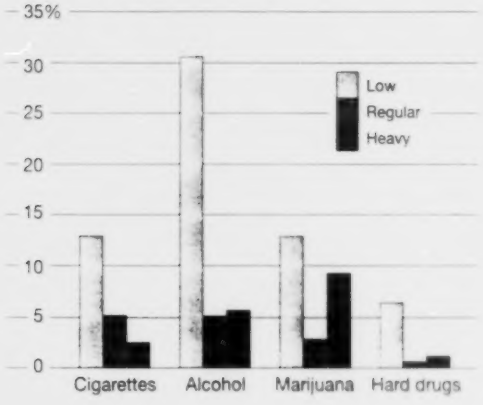


4 Harmful substance use in the last 30 days among white middle school students.

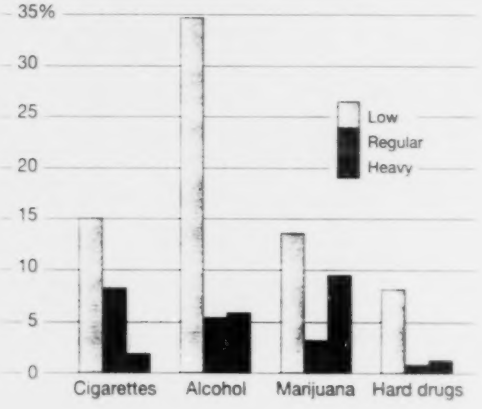


- Substance use starts in middle school, with one in five white youth and youth of color reporting low use. One in twenty is already a heavy user.
- There is little difference in level of use between youth of color and white youth.
- Alcohol is the substance of choice among both middle and high school students.

5 Harmful substance use in the last 30 days among high school students of color.



6 Harmful substance use in the last 30 days among white high school students.

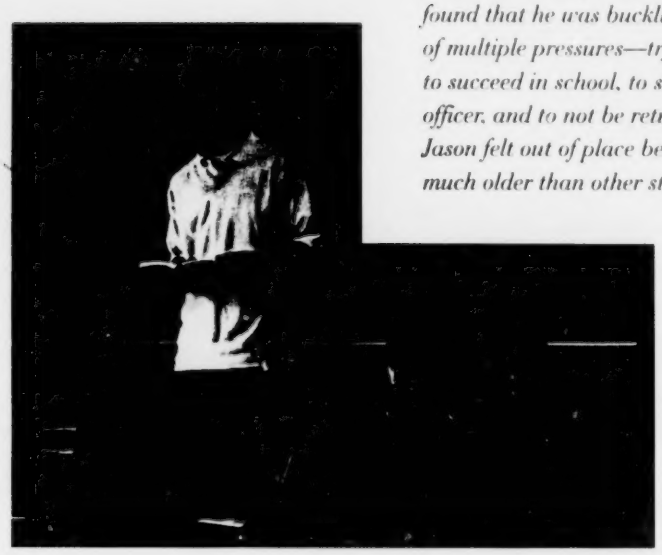


- Most high school students who use harmful substances report low use, with little difference in levels of use between youth of color and white youth.

Struggling Son, Struggling Mother

Jason Lek, an 18-year-old Cambodian youth was referred to Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families Against Substance Abuse (WAPIFASA) by the juvenile court. He was involved with a gang, using drugs and alcohol heavily, and in trouble with the law. Working with him weekly, an intervention specialist found that he was buckling under the stress of multiple pressures—trying desperately to succeed in school, to satisfy his probation officer, and to not be returned to detention. Jason felt out of place because he was so much older than other students.

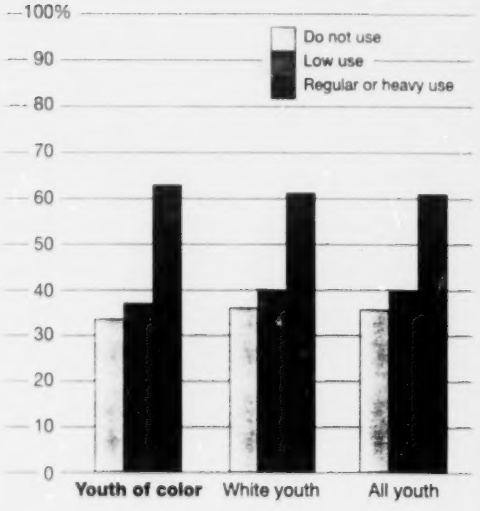
His mother also faced multiple pressures and had great need of support. She had other younger children to care for, suffered from several physical illnesses, but was taking classes at a community college to improve her English and gain U.S. citizenship. By working with the son to recognize the power of his own choices to direct his life and helping the mother to identify her needs for family and parenting support, the specialist was able to turn the situation around. She arranged for Jason to receive tutoring, counseling, and job-readiness training. The young man is now working and supporting his own family, while contributing to a positive home environment.



Adult Role Models

- Among high school students that report ***no use or low substance use,*** only about one third report that a family member has or has had a serious substance problem.
- About 60 percent of high school students who report ***regular or heavy substance use*** report that a family member has or has had a serious problem with substance use.

7 Percentage of students with a family member who has a drug or alcohol problem, by level of teen substance use.



Healthier Lives for Children of Color

Improved Public Policies for Health

Lack of stability and continuity of funding to address family, community, and substance abuse problems is consistently cited as a problem. These problems play out over long periods of time, and agencies seeking to maintain trust and build relationships with families and communities require stable funding and operations.

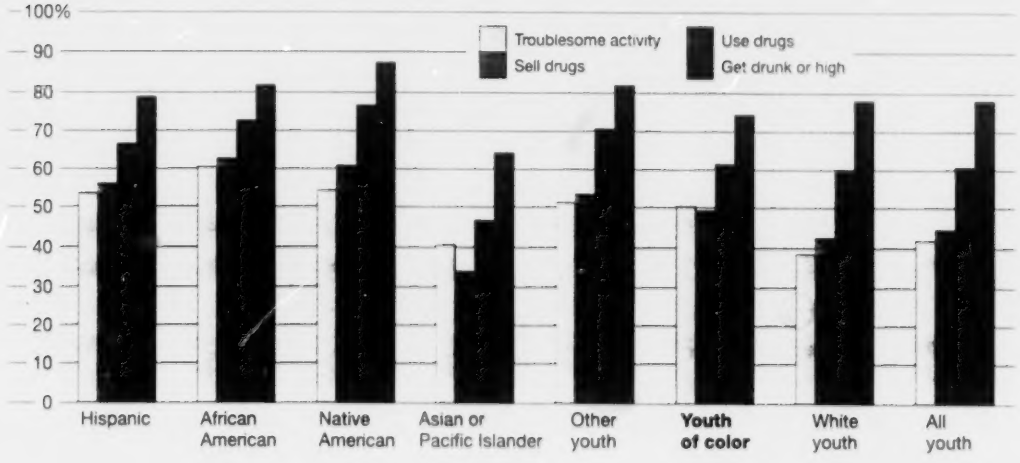
Culturally sensitive and competent care is a major issue, both for the effectiveness of services and for prevention efforts. For example, many communities of color share and receive information through radio or through respected leaders in the community rather than newspapers. African-American youth with mental health disorders are more likely to be judged to have conduct disorders or antisocial personalities and end up in the correctional system instead of treatment. There should be recognition of the needs and pressures of immigrant groups, and specific programs should be set up to address them.

Our existing publicly provided and subsized substance abuse and mental health services are inadequate to meet the needs of Washington's children. Too frequently, youth only receive health services when they get into trouble in school or involved with the justice system. Tobacco prevention and cessation programs must also be designed and marketed to appeal to youth of color, to offset the effects of tobacco companies' special efforts in advertising to communities of color.

Many children of color in Washington rely on the Medicaid program, where access and quality of care are serious issues for health coverage. The current structure and rate of reimbursement discourages many physicians from providing services to Medicaid clients. The state is failing to ensure adequate health screenings for children and to inform parents leaving welfare of their continued eligibility for child health benefits.

- Overall, about 40 to 80 percent of high school students report knowing adults who have engaged in destructive behavior.
- Unhealthy adult role models are more prevalent in Hispanic, African-American and Native American communities.

8 High school students who report knowing adults who engage in destructive behavior.



Programs That Give Hope

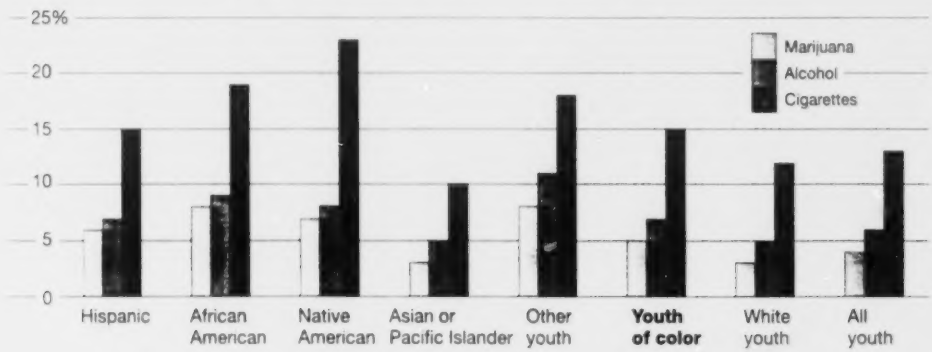
Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families Against Substance Abuse (WAPIFASA) serves youth in the Seattle/King County area. offering outpatient treatment and extensive substance abuse prevention programs. They focus on serving the whole family. and help parents advocate for their children despite barriers of language and cultural adjustment. WAPIFASA prevention programs concentrate on helping children in the vulnerable tran-sitional years—moving from elementary to middle school. then from middle to high school. In one program. the organization

Youth Combats Drugs

David. a highly introverted seventh-grade boy at risk for heavy use of alcohol and drugs came to the attention of WAPIFASA staff through a drug education and life skills class they conducted at a local school. David participated through seventh and eighth grades then was encouraged to attend their summer program. In these programs he developed maturity. self-esteem. and a willingness to speak out. He is now a member of the WAPIFASA Youth Council and makes presentations to elementary school classes and other youth groups about developing life skills and avoiding the use of harmful substances. This continuity and engagement with other youth is not unusual. "We even have a third-year college student who comes back during breaks and helps with the kids," says Elaine Ishihara of WAPIFASA.

- Most high school students report knowing no adults who condone teenage substance use.
- More high school students report knowing adults who condone teenage cigarette use than condone teenage use of marijuana and alcohol.

9 High school students who report knowing adults who condone teenage substance use.



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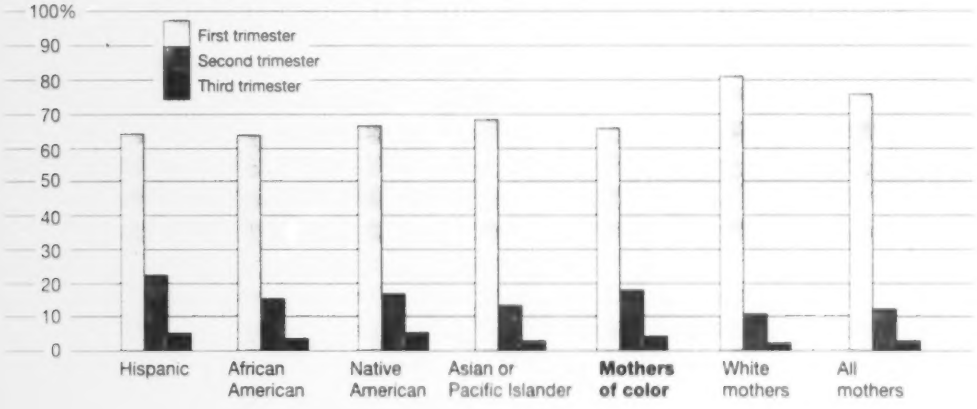
works with seventh- and eighth-grade students to prepare them for the transition to high school. They work with whole classrooms on leadership development, communication skills, and responsible decisionmaking. Youth who have been through the program are tapped to join the Youth Council, which offers further leadership development opportunities. This approach gives the programs sustainable impact.

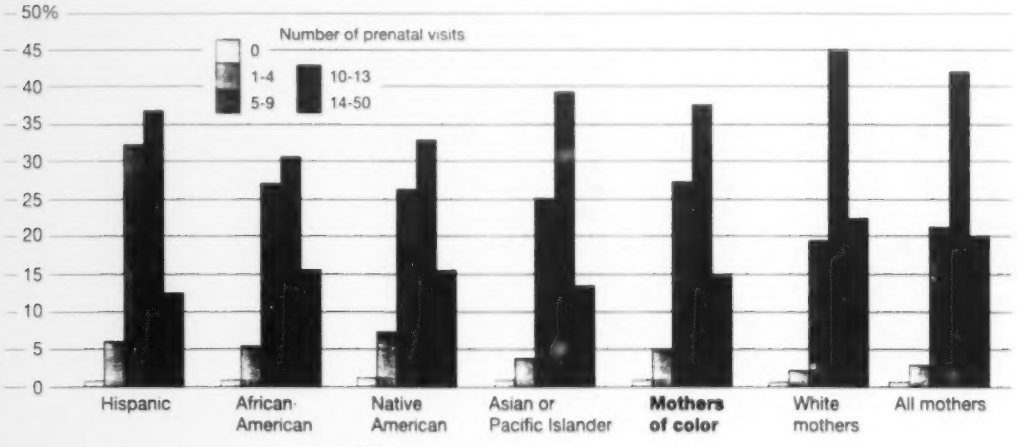
Prenatal Care for Healthy Babies

10 Children born to mothers receiving prenatal care, by trimester when prenatal care begins.



- Early prenatal care is related to healthy babies. About one in four Hispanic, African-American, and Native American children born in 1998 were born to a mother who did not receive prenatal care in the first trimester.

11 Children born to mothers receiving prenatal care, by number of visits.



- Less than one percent of children born in 1998 were born to mothers who had no prenatal care.
- A majority of mothers received adequate (5-9 visits) to optimal (10-13 visits) prenatal care.
- One in four babies of color was born to a mother with inadequate prenatal care (1-4 visits).

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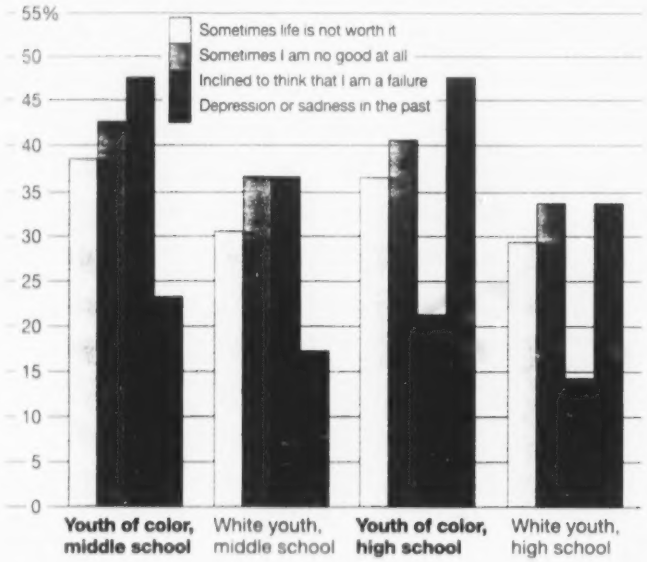
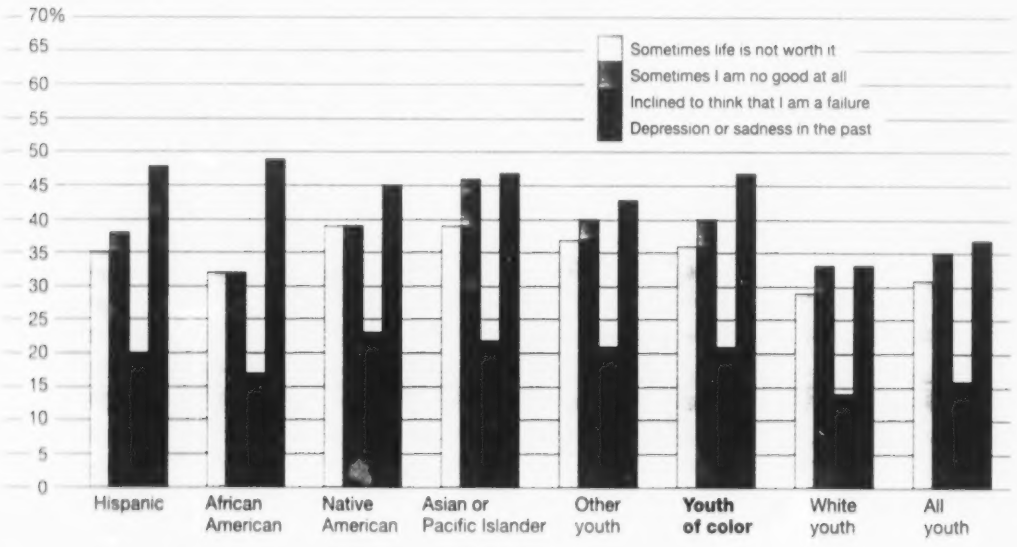
Teen Depression Is a Major Problem

- More high school students report feeling depressed or sad than middle school students.
- More middle school students report having feelings of failure than high school students.
- Overall, many children report signs of depression. However, a slightly greater percentage of children of color report indicators of depression than white children.

12 Signs of depression for middle and high school students.



13 Signs of depression for high school students, by group.



- About one in three high school students show some signs of depression. These numbers are higher in youth of color than in white youth.

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Safer
Children

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Safer Children

Community Perspectives

Focus group research in Washington revealed great resentment by people of color at what they perceive as a lack of cultural competence and sensitivity on the part of child protection workers. Like all citizens, they believe case workers should be given training and sufficient time and resources to fully understand the dynamics of what is happening to the family they are investigating. However, they believe that even when the time is taken, workers do not understand parenting styles and expectations sufficiently to judge whether treatment is really abusive or neglectful. Ms. Kikora Dorsey, speaking for the Seattle chapter of the Black Child Development Institute states, "while there are some cultural parenting styles among African Americans that may be seen as inappropriate in terms of discipline, it is important to consider that inappropriate does not always equal abusive."

The greatest concern of leaders of color is ensuring that the data be interpreted in a way that is helpful to families, to get vulnerable families help before maltreatment occurs. They see poverty, rural isolation, and a long history of discrimination and poor service as contributing to the problems of people of color.

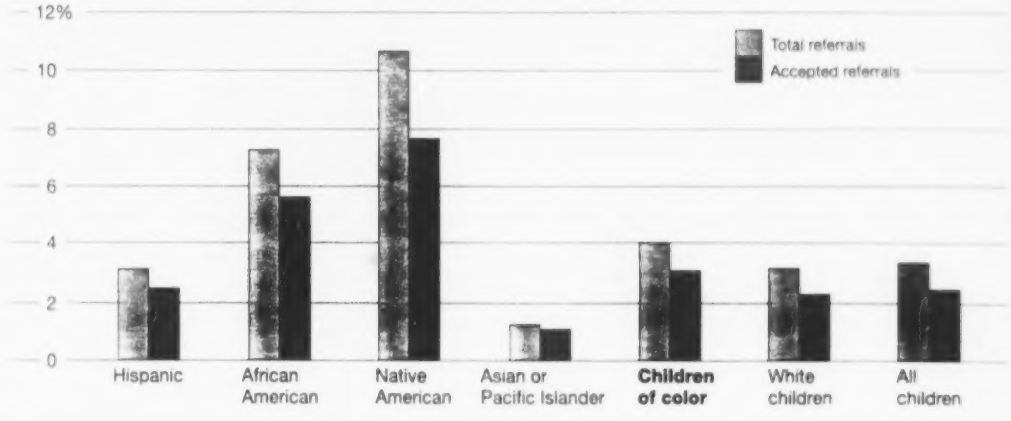
As reported in the survey, leaders see just as much caring among parents of color. When given access to help, as with the Black Child Development Institute's Parent Help Line, parents of color make a high rate of calls, demonstrating their desire to be involved and do more. Martha Yallup, from the Yakama Nation, expects the reported rate of abuse and neglect to be going up because the Nation is giving high priority to developing an awareness of the problems of domestic violence and child abuse in their community and dealing with it. She states, "we are training people to make reports and we are reporting things that we think need to be investigated, with the goal to stop it." Similarly, it bears repeating that child neglect can occur when families lack economic resources and both parents are working to support the family, leaving the children alone. "While it may be inappropriate to leave the child alone, there may be real issues around that family's resources that make it happen," says Dorsey.

- One third of children referred to CPS for abuse or neglect are screened out and not accepted for further investigation. Of the cases accepted, a portion are initially substantiated as abused and neglected. Many others are substantiated at a later date.

- Rates for accepted victims are higher for preschool (birth to 5) and school children (age 6 to 12), and drop by half in adolescent years (age 13-17).

- Native American and African-American children are victims of reported abuse or neglect at about three times the rate of other children.

1 Children referred to and accepted by Child Protective Services (CPS) for suspected abuse or neglect, by rates per child population.



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Mother Restored

Carolyn, an African-American mother, came to the attention of the child welfare system when, at the birth of her son, she tested positive for cocaine. Carolyn was in denial about the extent of her drug use, believing herself to be only a recreational user who could stop at any given time. Besides her drug use, Carolyn was also homeless and living from day to day. Her family had already taken over the care of her three older children out of concerns over her drug use.

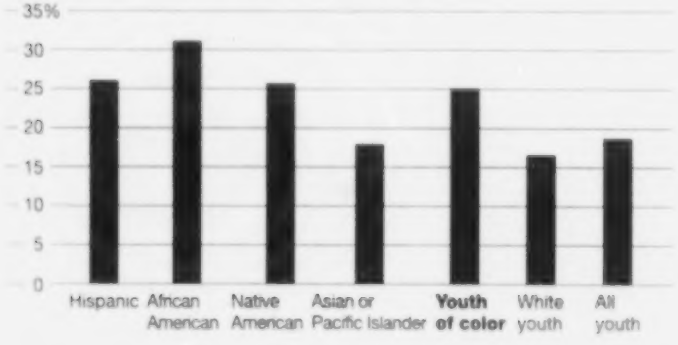
Despite this, Carolyn refused the help of child welfare workers and turned instead to the courts to maintain custody of her baby. Her son was placed in short-term foster care and the court ordered her to complete a drug and alcohol assessment, get treatment, submit to random drug tests, complete a parenting class, and work with a public health nurse.

Carolyn's attitude toward the child welfare system began to improve with the involvement of the African American Children's Section (AACS). She enrolled in a parenting class, successfully completed her drug and alcohol assessment and the drug class, and the public health nurse issued great reports. After initially resisting help, Carolyn now thanks her social workers for helping her to help herself and to raise her family.

Her success allowed the court to dismiss the petition to make her baby a dependant of the state. Family members, convinced that she is now supportive and nurturing, returned her three older children to her care.

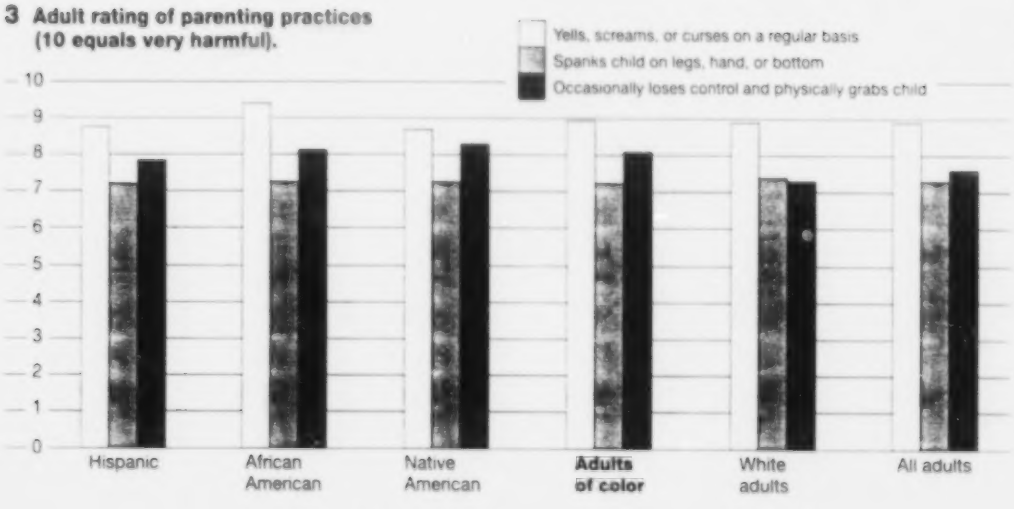
The AACS helped Carolyn locate safe and stable, drug-free housing for her family. And her extended family received support, too—the AACS has helped them to build on their own safety net in the event they are required to protect these children again.

2 Youth who self-report physical or sexual abuse.



- On a state-administered survey, one in five adolescents self-report some type of physical or sexual abuse at some time in their life.
- More adolescents of color (25%) than white adolescents (16%) self-report some type of physical or sexual abuse at some time in their life.

3 Adult rating of parenting practices (10 equals very harmful).



- Across all groups, parents agree on what behaviors constitute harmful parenting practices.

Increased Safety for Children of Color

Improved Public Policies for Children's Safety

Families need support before abuse and neglect occur. Even when abuse is found, help can be provided by such prevention programs as afterschool care, opportunities to reconnect with neighbors, parenting classes, and family-support services. A continuum of prevention through treatment services should be provided in a coordinated, simple-to-use manner in local communities. Effective prevention programs recognize and build on the strengths of families and communities.

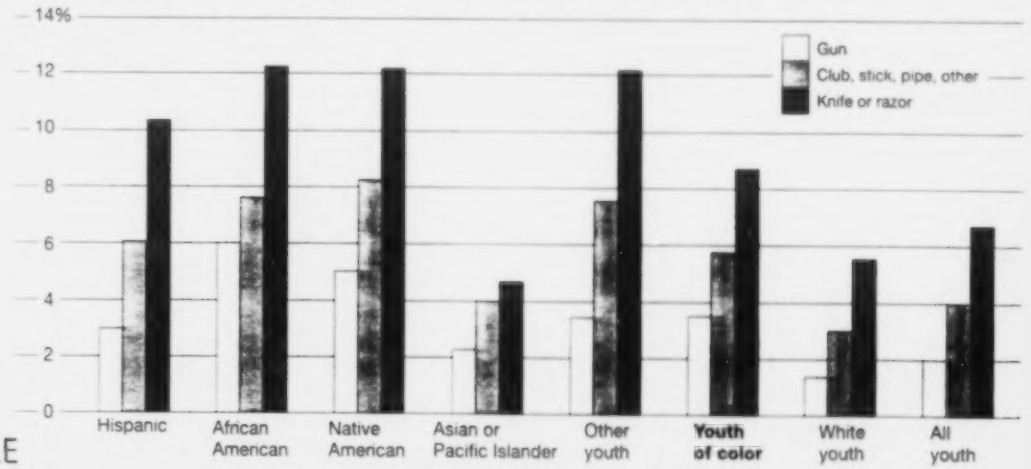
"No one wants to pay for prevention. Prevention is long term and we live in an immediate gratification society; we want to know tomorrow what difference it made. But we won't change parenting attitudes in one generation. We need time."

— *Kikora Dorsey, Black Child Development Institute, Seattle*

- Across all groups, a knife or razor was the most common weapon carried on school property by high school students last year.

- Eighty-four percent of middle and high school students who carried weapons to school engaged in some form of destructive behavior.

4 High school students who carried a weapon onto school property within the last year.



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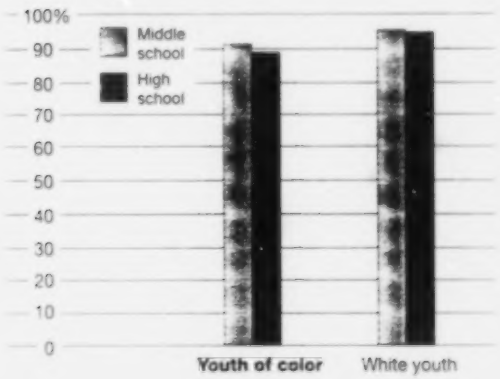
Specific training in diversity, cultural competence, and culturally appropriate community resources should be provided to all who work in the child welfare system. Culturally competent advocates, caseworkers, and mentors can help provide support for children and families of color receiving services. Culturally appropriate child-abuse prevention campaigns, conducted under the auspices of organizations within communities of color, could foster improved awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect, as well as opportunities to become foster and adoptive families.

We have some good models to build on. For example, the Yakama Nation is trying to assess all 2,000 of its preschool-aged children, and get them the resources neces-sary to enhance their development. Major programs include a child placement agency for children suffering from abuse or neglect; early Head Start and child care for working parents; an early disability program; maternal and child health, which has produced a very high immunization rate; and the WIC feeding program for pregnant women and mothers with infants.

5 Students who did not take weapons to school wtihin the last year.

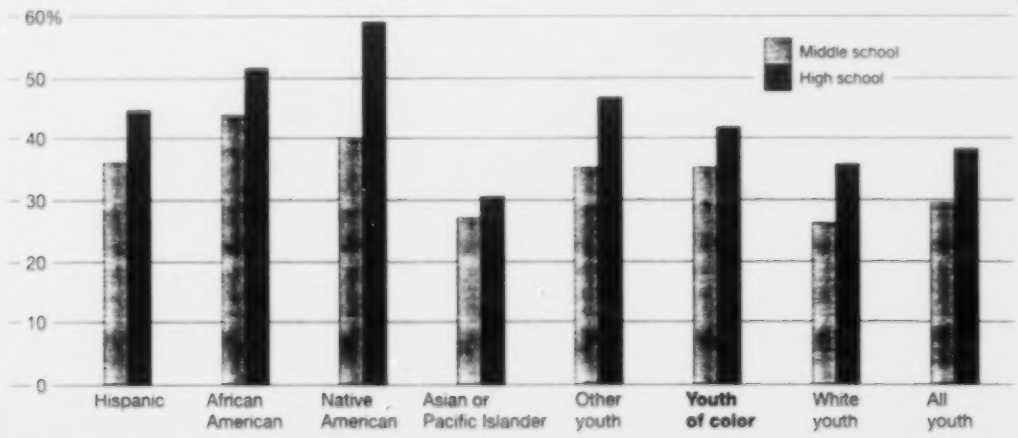


- Over 90 percent of middle and high school students never carried a weapon to school.

- Both children of color and white children engage in destructive behavior, but about 10 percent more children of color do so.

- Among children of color, about one in three middle school and almost one in two high school students engaged in destructive behavior.

6 Destructive behavior by middle high school students.



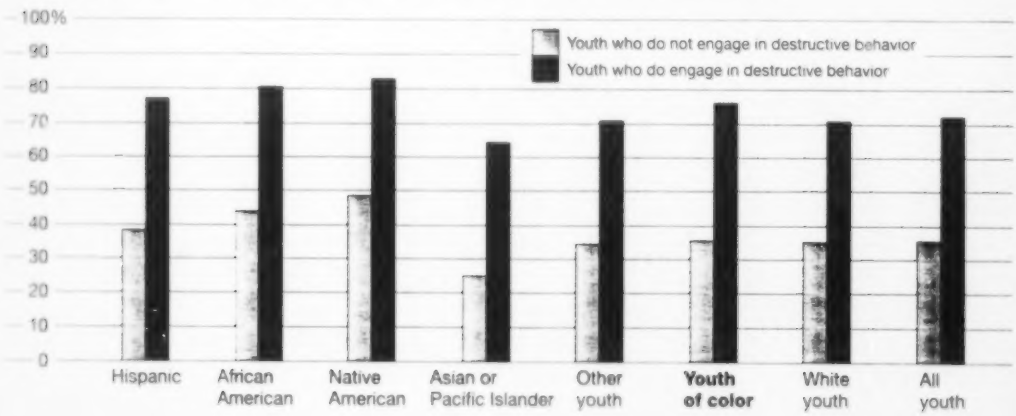
- Destructive behavior includes carrying a gun, stealing a car, getting arrested, attacking someone with the intent to seriously harm them or getting drunk or high at school.

Programs That Give Hope

Consejo is a private not-for-profit organization founded in 1978 to provide culturally competent mental health and family-support services in western Washington. Most clients are Spanish speaking. The organization has found that the problem of domestic violence is often closely tied to mental illness, substance abuse, poverty, and language and cultural barriers. Consejo provides education; prevention; treatment and support services related to mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence; as well as rehabilitation and employment services. The broad range of services for children and families with emotional or behavioral difficulties includes individual and family therapy, 24-hour on-call case management, psychiatric care, and medication management. Consejo also operates two transitional housing programs, "Las Brisas" for homeless or mentally ill individuals and "Mi Casa" for victims of domestic violence and their children. In addition to housing, families receive parenting education, ESL classes, psychiatric care, individual and group therapy, support groups, child therapy, and employment

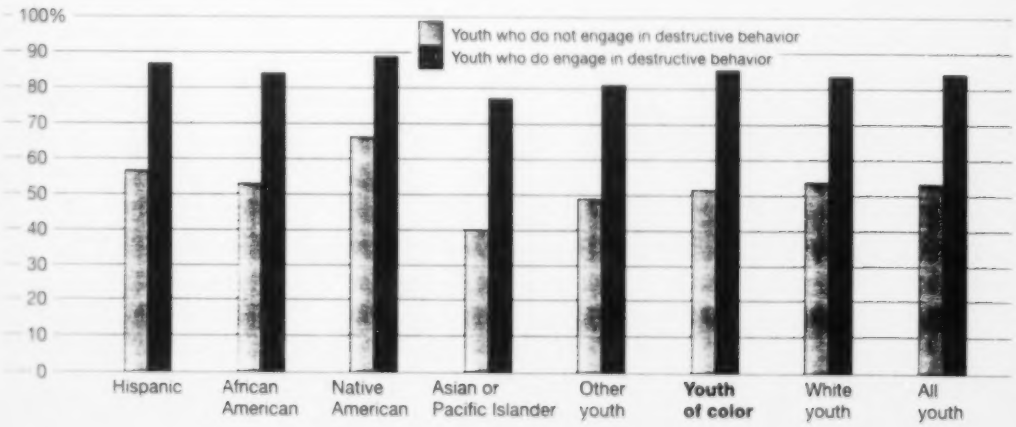
- Across all groups, youth who report knowing adults who engage in destructive behavior are more likely to do so themselves.

7 Students who report knowing adults who engage in destructive behavior.



- Youth who report engaging in destructive behavior are more likely to report knowing adults who use or abuse drugs/alcohol.
- Half of the youth reporting exposure to adults who use or abuse drugs/alcohol do not engage in destructive behavior.

8 Youth who know adults who use or abuse drugs/alcohol, by whether youth engage in destructive behavior.

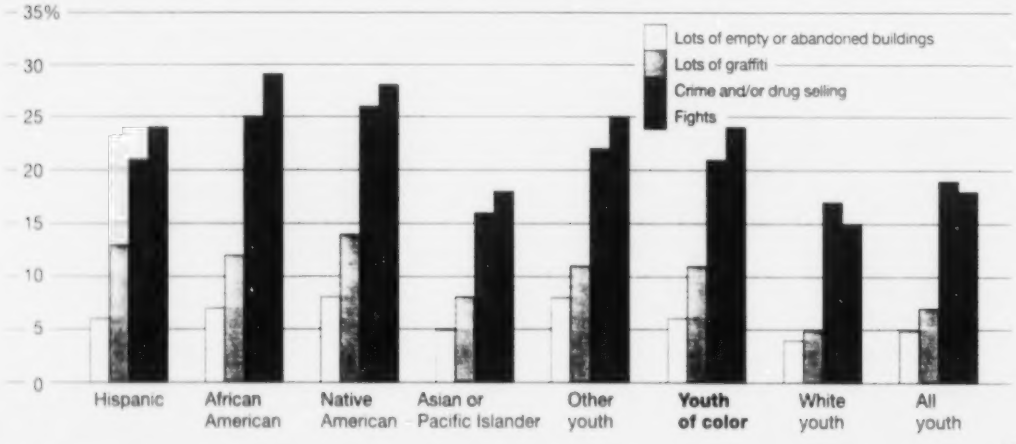


services. Consejo uses an "interdependent treatment model," where clients feel accepted and emotionally secure, experience personal growth, and develop new skills. This approach empowers troubled individuals to participate successfully in the community.

The African-American Children's Section of the State Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in King County was formed on a pilot basis in 1999 to address the over-representation of African Americans within the child protection system. It is intended to prevent the breakup of African-American families and achieve timely and permanent family placements for children who are in out-of-home care as a result of maltreatment. The goals are to

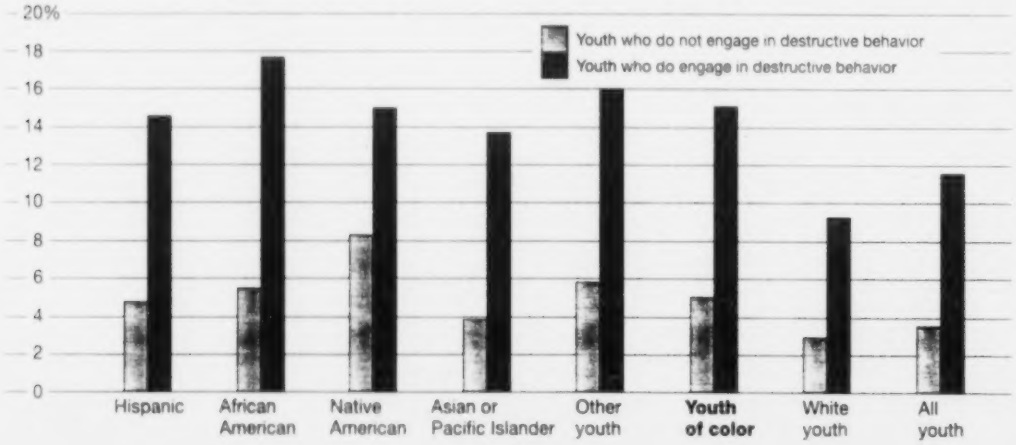
- Prevent recurrence of abuse or neglect.
- Address and meet the needs of all family members.
- Decrease the length of stay for African-American children in state care.

9 Students who describe their neighborhoods as having abandoned/empty buildings, graffiti, crime/drugs, and fights.



- About one in four youth of color describe their neighborhoods as having fights, and one in five describe their neighborhoods as having crime and/or drug selling.

10 Students living in dangerous neighborhoods, by whether they engage in destructive behavior.



- A higher percentage of students living in dangerous neighborhoods engage in destructive behavior. However, since most students do not live in dangerous neighborhoods, almost 90 percent of youth reporting destructive behavior live in other areas.

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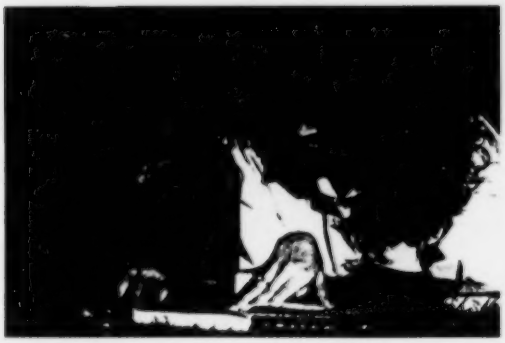
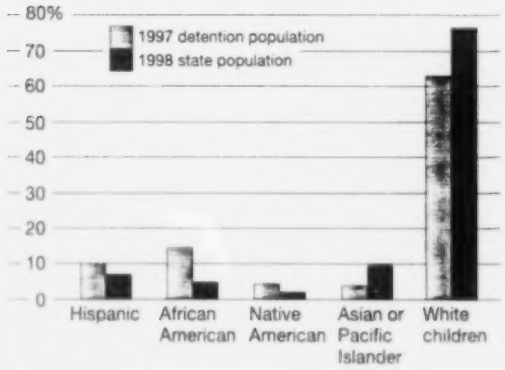
Social workers in the African-American Children's Section have received specialized training to obtain an accurate and culturally relevant picture of African-American families. Families assessed as high-risk receive a comprehensive family assessment, focused on individual functioning, relationships, and environmental conditions, and services appropriate to the unique needs of each family. Services include individual and family therapy, caregiver training classes, and advocacy. Family group conferences with a facilitator allow families a vital decision-making role at the earliest possible point and promote responsibility for providing care and protection for children in extended families.



11 Percentage of youth in detention compared to percentage in the population.

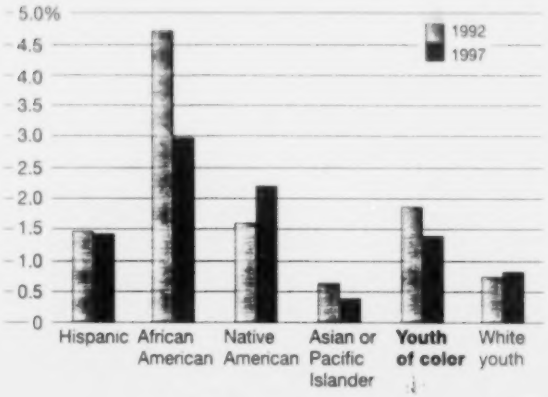
- Most of the youth sent to juvenile detention are white.
- In 1997, there were 31,000 youth in detention:
  - 19,600 white youth
  - 3,100 Hispanic
  - 4,500 African American
  - 1,400 Native American
  - 1,200 Asian or Pacific Islander



- A smaller percentage of white youth and Asian and Pacific Islander youth are detained than their share of the total population.
- A larger percentage of Hispanic, Native American, and African-American youth are detained than their share of the total population.

12 Index comparing youth in detention to percentage of youth in population, 1997 versus 1992.

- Disproportionate representation of youth of color in detention declined from 1992 to 1997.



- For most groups (with the exception of Native Americans), the juvenile detention disproportionality index decreased between 1992 and 1997.

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Sources

In this report we utilize the best sources of data available, drawn from a variety of sources, mostly state agencies. However, we recognize that all sources of data have limitations. An important limitation is the categorization of many diverse groups into the more general race/ethnicity categories (e.g., *African American, Native American, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander,* and *White*). Lumping together diverse groups of people may represent a serious over simplification. The Asian or Pacific Islander category, for example, may include Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Asian Indian, Samoan, Guamanian, or other Asian or Pacific Islander. Although using general racial-ethnic categories may have limitations, this is often necessary when analyzing data to achieve representative sample sizes. For some data, racial-ethnic distributions are unreliable. Because of these limitations, we recognize that this report is an initial effort to examine Washington's children of color, and does not completely capture all the individual and unique differences of Washington's children and families.

Although Washington is a leading state in collecting useful data, it falls short in some critical areas, where data is collected only on "problems" as defined by helping agencies, and only for people in contact with those agencies, rather than collecting general population data on a full range of strengths and weaknesses. Critical areas of missing data include: family interaction, domestic violence, housing, homelessness, runaway youth, transportation, community revitalization and renewal, and economic development. Standardized test scores measure part of students' achievement, but we lack qualitative data that measure other important aspects.

U.S. Census of Population (1980 and 1990)

The census, collected every ten years, is the most complete source of data for demographic and economic conditions, but misses some individuals. In 1990, the Census estimated a net undercount of about four million people, a rate of approximately 1.6 percent. African Americans, immigrants, inner-city residents, and children are prone to undercount; the net undercount for Blacks was 4.4 percent in 1980.

The Census classifies citizens into different categories according to race, posing a conflict with the term "Hispanic" which denotes ethnic origin rather than racial origin. Today's racial categories are based on today's social values, and will change according to new developments in race and ethnic relations. Starting with the 2000 Census, people will be able to indiciate more than one racial-ethnic category. In addition to five racial-ethnic categories (Hispanic, African American, Native American, Asian or Pacific Islander, and white), three non-Census data sources used in this report include an "other" category. The Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors includes student self identification as "other." Vital Statistics includes a category of "other," as indicated by the recorder of the birth certificate. The WASL test includes an option for "multiracial," which was labeled as "other" in this report.

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The Census employs the terms "household" and "family" in a manner significantly different from everyday usage. It defines the household by the housing unit, not by the social or biological relationship of the individuals. Thus, two families sharing a single home are counted as a single household.

Washington State Vital Statistics, 1998 (published in 1999)

Vital statistics, compiled from individual certificates of birth, death, marriage and dissolution of marriage, contain important data on health and family characteristics. These include births, deaths, mother's age and marital status, amount or prenatal care, and health-related behavior (use of tobacco, alcohol). Some data categories are underreported, limiting their usefulness.

Juvenile Justice Report, 1998

The Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (GJJAC) collects and analyzes juvenile justice system data and risk factors that may lead to delinquency and issues an annual *Juvenile Justice Report*. Data limitations include duplicate counts (the same individual arrested more than once) and inaccurate data caused by different recording procedures by different detention agencies. Data is only provided for reported crime and arrests, not victimization rates of the general population. The National Crime Victimization Survey has demonstrated that rates of victimization greatly exceed reported crimes, and that some crimes (rape, domestic violence) are drastically underreported.

Child Abuse and Neglect Data

The Children's Administration in the Department of Socal and Health Services collects child abuse and neglect data, based on all cases referred to Child Protective Services (CPS), and has provided us special tabulations used in this report. These compilations are "unduplicated" counts, with a single household only counted once, even if it has been referred multiple times in a single year. The data include total referrals (all children in referred households counted), total victim referrals (only children listed as potential victims counted), total accepted referrals (all children in the household accepted for investigation based upon initial screening), and total accepted victim referrals (potential child victims in household only). It is known from numerous studies that only a fraction of child maltreatment is reported, and a higher proportion of actual abuse and neglect may be reported to CPS for low-income groups, who are better known to state agencies through their participation in assistance programs, and who lack other sources of help.

School Building Enrollment, 1998

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) collects school building enrollment every year in October. HSPC performed calculations on these data to determine the number of students who attend racially segregated schools.

State Population Survey, 1998

The State Population Survey (SPS) was designed by the State Office of Financial Mangement and was administered through telephone interviews in the spring of 1998, and is being repeated in 2000. The survey reached 7,279 households and 19,923 individuals. The data set provides social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the population in the State of Washington. An important limitation of the SPS is its inability to determine the specific relationship between adults and children in the households, specifically, which adults are parents of which children in the household. While telephone surveys may fail to properly represent certain groups such as low-income families and immigrants who may not own telephones or may not speak English, good surveys use statistical methods to adjust findings for under represented groups.

Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors, 1998 and 1995

The Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors (WSSAHB) has been conducted by the OSPI about every two years since 1988, in partnership with other state agencies. The 1998 statewide survey includes a representative core

sample of 14,601 students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12, from 102 schools and an additional 37,731 students from 258 voluntarily participating schools. The 1998 survey provides data on students' attitudes and behaviors regarding their use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, their intention to cause injury as well as their possession of weapons, and many other factors that put them at risk for or protected them from unsafe and unhealthy behaviors. The 1995 survey provides information on physical fitness, unintentional injury, intentional injury, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, HIV/AIDS and STD education, and risk and protective factors. Much of the information provided in 1995 was no longer available in the 1998 survey, reducing our capacity to track the health and family conditions of Washington's children.

Communications for Child Protection Project Survey, 1997

The Human Services Policy Center arranged interviews with 1,300 randomly selected Washington adults about attitudes concerning the protection of children from abuse and neglect, including asking what behaviors constitute child abuse and neglect. The survey ensured adequate numbers of African American, Native American, and Hispanic respondents. Because there was an insufficient sample of the Asian and Pacific Islander populations, it was not possible to include data for these groups, on the subject of child abuse and neglect, in this report.

Standardized Test Scores: 1999 Washington Assessment of Student Learning

The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) was developed to measure student achievement of the "essential academic learning requirements" for students in the State of Washington. The state tests are administered to all students in grades 4, 7, and 10 and are criterion-referenced. Criterion-referenced tests measure the degree to which students have learned the target skills identified as appropriate for a given grade or developmental level in school. In our analyses, we excluded students receiving special education, education for the handicapped, Title 1 for migrant status, and/or Bilingual/ESL Education Services. The WASL tests were developed and scaled with the assumption of English language facility and normal communication skills. Including other students would have produced a biased underestimate of actual achievement. A major limitation of the WASL includes its lack of socio-economic information about its students.

Data Sources

Demographic Background

Maps 1-2, 4-5, and 8: State Population Survey, 1998
Charts 3, 6-7: State Population Survey, 1998
Chart 9: School Building Enrollment, 1998

Social and Economic Support

Charts 1-6, 9-12: State Population Survey, 1998
Charts 7-8: Vital Statistics, 1998

Educational Performance

Charts 1-6: Washington Assessment Student Learning tests
Charts 7-11: Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors, 1998
Charts 12-13: State Population Survey, 1998

Health and Substance Abuse

Charts 1-6, 8-9, 12-13: Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors, 1998
Chart 7: Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behaviors, 1995
Charts 10-11: Washington State Vital Statistics, 1998

Safer Children

Chart 1: Child Abuse and Neglect Data, 1998
Chart 2: Washington State Survey of Adolescent Behaviors, 1995
Chart 3: Communication for Child Protection Project Survey, 1997
Charts 4-6, 9: Washignton State Survey of Adolescent Behaviors, 1998
Charts 7-8, 10: Washignton State Survey of Adolescent Behaviors, 1995
Charts 11-12: Juvenile Justice Report, 1998 and State Population Survey, 1998

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Thank you to our report advisory committee:

Sadikifu Akina-James, King County Community Services Division

Kim Archie, Central Youth and Family Services

Lolo Arevalo, United Way of King County

Marcella Benson-Quaziena, The Benson-Quaziena Group

Stella Chao, WILD Program/International District Housing Alliance

Victor Crouch, United Way of King County

David Della, United Way of King County

Kikora Dorsey, Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Leslie Eastwood, Samish Nation

Dorry Elias Lopez, Minority Executive Director's Coalition

Freddie Mae Gautier, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

Rodney Hines, Cedar River Associates

Elaine Ishihara, Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families Against Substance Abuse

John Lether, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

Lupe Lopez, People of Color Against AIDS Network

Jocelyn Lui, Asian Counseling and Referral Service

Richard Mar, Family Leadership Fund

Lorna Mike, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

Liz Mueller, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

Thomas Octuck, Seattle Indian Health Board

Dave Okimoto, Atlantic Street Center

Tony Orange, Commission on African American Affairs

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Angelina Ramirez, Girl Scouts — Totem Council

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WASHINGTON kids count

Facts of Life for Children of Color in Washington was produced by the Washington Kids Count project of the Human Services Policy Center, at the University of Washington's Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs. Washington Kids Count monitors the conditions of children and families in Washington, educates the public and policymakers about those conditions, and urges public action on behalf of improved outcomes.

Washington Kids Count Advisory Board:
Dr. Joseph Bell, Department of Social and Health Services; Linda Carpenter, Washington Parent Teachers Association; Larry Fehr, Pioneer Human Services; Garrison Kurz, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development; Charles Langdon, Advancing Solutions to Adolescent Pregnancy; Dr. Maxine Hayes, Department of Health; Dr. Hubert Locke, Evans School of Public Affairs; Dr. Dorothy Mann, UW Institute for Public Policy and Management; Dr. Ed Marcuse, American Academy of Pediatrics, Washington Chapter; Dr. Sheri Reder, Health Care Consultant; Paul Shoemaker, Social Venture Partners; Gerard (Sid) Sidorowicz, Department of Social and Health Services; Pam Tollefson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Peggy Walton, Junior League of Seattle.

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For further information or other Washington Kids Count reports, call us at 206-685-7613. This and other reports from the Human Services Policy Center are available online at **http://hspc.org**

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